



# Darshans - Articles

by His Divine Grace Srila B.R. Sridhara Maharaja

from <http://premanidhi.hostfree.pw>

*sadhu-sanga', 'sadhu-sanga' - sarva-sastre kaya  
lava-matra sadhu-sange sarva-siddhi haya*

Chaitanya Charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 22.54

"The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success."

## "Famous Mirabai"

**Devotee:** Maharaj, I have heard one story, I wanted to know, you can tell me if it is true or not. It is about Mirabai, famous Mirabai, the woman devotee, and Jiva Goswami.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We do not know that. So far we know, that Mirabai's devotion is that of some mistype, not real type of devotion. Because her devotion only confined to Krsna and not any mention of any devotees. Krsna, where there is only mentioned the king that is imperfect. King means, so many ministers, generals, queens all these things... King is not one. So, Krsna is not one, the swarup shakti is there.

And that is real Krsna. And the other Krsna is a Krsna creation, a mental creation, a concoction. That is reflection of Krsna maybe in this world. Where we cannot see that Krsna with his different rasas is surrounded by different

servitor groups. That is real Krsna. True Krsna is of that conception, that is in swarup shakti, otherwise in this area maya the sattva guna and Krsna has come and I and Krsna. And Krsna surrounded by his swarup shakti servitors that is real krsna, Chid-vilas. And in the transcendental world in His own position Krsna is such, and by crossing them, without caring to see them, my direct contact to Krsna that is a dream, that is an imagination, not reality.

So Gaudiya Math people and their *acharyas* and their consideration can not give assertion to so many sentimental, emotional that maybe, but the bottom the foundation is wrong. That sentiments can not give us Krsna, all those sentimental things. But Krsna is not alone and without submitting to his eternal devotees we can never approach Him properly.

The proper approach towards Krsna can not but be through his devotees. Not direct contact or contract to get Him is possible. Hare Krsna

**Devotee:** so direct service...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Of Krsna never possible for the *tatasta shakti*, Jiva.

**Devotee:** So their direct service will be to the servitors, the servants of the servant.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Through the servant of the servant that service that is realistic conception of service of Krsna. Otherwise that is imaginary. It is not measured by the amount of tears or amount of dancing or so many things.

**Devotee:** Maharaj, they say that she took initiation from Jiva Goswami.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** No, we don't find that. In the songs of Mirabai such things are not present. Some connections, something is known. She also insulted Jiva Goswami. It is told, that Mirabai came to see Rupa Goswami and Rupa Goswami, at that time she was in a particular mood, he said, 'I don't like to see any lady now.' Then she told, "Oh, he thinks himself to be a man. I think, the only man in Vrndavan is Krsna and all else are women." With that remark she went away. This also was mentioned in "Bhakta-mal" grantha. And that is not very authentic book. It is a collection about the lives of many devotees of different types, but not very authentic.

**Devotee:** Maharaj, I have heard, she is a gopi on Chandravali's side.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We did not hear it and we do not accept it. But in that case she will have to give recognition of Chandravali, the gopis, Nanda and Yashoda, and Vrndavan, so many things must come for her praise. Only Krsna is the object of her praise, admiration and all are diminished. She cannot see the greatness, the nobelness of the paraphernalia, only Krsna – this is artificial. “If you want to be My devotee, become devotee of the devotee. One who is the devotee of the devotee he is My real devotee.” And I cannot recognize the greatness, the nobelness of the devotee of Krsna and diminishing them “I am good and Krsna is good” and all are diminished. What is this! No better person than myself, only Krsna and myself, and all others are diminished. This is madness. Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna.

### **A self-giving attitude is our friend**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Guidance must come from those above you. It is very rare, but it is most valuable to us. Whatever directions are coming from above, we must selflessly embrace that as all in all. This is the clue: this is the key to the Hidden Treasures in your heart. I will not work with my whims or serve men on my level. But we shall very eagerly obey what directions will come from the above plane. This is service proper and it will be a real help for progressing on the path of dedication and self-giving.

What is necessary for our progress is very rarely to be found. It comes from a higher plane and we must surrender ourselves to substantiate that reality within us.

*viracaya mayi dandam dinabandho dayam va  
gatih iha na bhavattah kacid anya mamasti  
nipyatatu sata-kotir nirbharam va nayambhas  
tad api kila payodah stuyate catakena*

“The Cataka bird is a kind of bird that drinks only rain water from above. This class of bird is always looking high in the sky for rain drops to fall. There may

be much water available here on the ground, but this bird will not take a drop. They are waiting for that rain water which comes from above. Sufficient rain water may come, or thunder may come, but still they will not take a single drop from the earth.”

Our attitude should be like this. Whatever directions will come from above for us to do, we shall take that on our heads as our life and soul. But we shall never take any plan from this mundane world. The Director, the Master, the Lord is there and I am connected with Him. This sort of practice is helpful. We may take the Holy Name, or hear the devotional musical chants, but the very life will be that it is coming from the above place; and I am carrying out that order.

In this way, I may be taken above to the higher planes. I shall be directed to the higher layers and I may go there eternally. I am preparing myself only to carry out this spotless, uncolored order and surrender without any questioning. If we are sure it is coming from the higher layer, then we shall live selflessly at His disposal. We want selfless service to the higher and not to any mundane source. This is what is necessary for real progress in the line of self-dedication and self-giving. This is service. Many signs and symptoms are there to indicate the higher directions descending from Gurudeva. We shall whole-heartedly embrace the directions given by Gurudeva.

The sum and substance is that by obeying the directions from the Higher, we can make progress towards the higher planes. By serving the Higher, we can hope to be selected by the Higher. We may then be taken up into that higher layer if we are considered qualified through our dedication. If we want to go towards that high, high super-conscious region, then this is the process of self-giving that will be the main tenure of our lives.

Revealed Truth is necessary. No intelligence or reason can be applied here. If we apply any reason, then we will be nowhere. A man who is expert in argument will defeat another man not so qualified in argument, but the truth remains regardless. Intellect and reason have no position there because truth, super-consciousness and dedication do not come within the jurisdiction of intellect, logic and reason.

We can invite that High Guest only by serving, by honoring, by self-giving, by heart-giving and never otherwise.

It is not possible to enforce, to capture or to encase Him by any intrigue or by any conspiracy. This will have the opposite effect. This is considered as Satan in

another colour. God realization means saranagati, self-surrender unto Him. We can approach Him not only through self-abnegation, but with deep self-surrender. This self-surrender, saranagati, will take us in connection with the higher, nobler substance. This self-surrender, self-giving is to be cultivated at all cost. Service is to God, and not to misconception, maya. We must be very careful that we are not serving maya in a charming form. In the form of god – in a godly form – some maya is coming to take us away from our service. So, in our present position, we must very carefully consider the propriety of our service – that to whom we are giving that service are not themselves serving maha-maya.

So, jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva. “To hatefully give up all proposals that the intellect will offer to you. To hatefully throw out what your intellect will come to propose to you. What the intellect will be able to judge and accept or not accept, that must be of a lower type. So, summarily you are to reject that and understand you must bow down your head, namanta eva. We are to approach the higher substance in this way.”

The beginning of your real self-interest is to bow down your head, capturing your heart automatically. Try to connect with that section where you will always be with folded palms as a servant and never as a master. Such abnegation, such courage of self-giving is necessary if you want to live in the higher plane. Otherwise, you will become a master and reign in hell. In Satan’s words, “It is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven.” But, in wholesale self-giving, just the opposite is necessary.

Even tears and cries will have no value if the inner tendency of self-giving is not awakened there. “Seva – service, is self-giving” – this is the main principle of life in the devotee. This self-giving is really meant towards the higher planes and not here and there around us in this mortal world. Otherwise, in another way, this self-giving tendency may be captured by the hateful things of this perishable world. Jnana, knowledge, is supposed to be very, very pure and free from doubt. In the majority of persons, knowledge is considered very innocent as it does not mix with these gross material things. The higher personalities consider knowledge to be very pure, very innocent and spotless. But, if this knowledge is not connected with Krsna, then it must be rejected. In Srimad Bhagavatam it is written:

*naiskarmyam apy acyuta-bhava-varjitam*

*na sobhate jnanam alam niranjanam*  
Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.12

“Knowledge is widely considered as pure, innocent and spotless. But if it is not connected with the Positive Absolute Good, then it is your enemy and it will devour you.”

You are to consider like that, then you will become a qualified candidate. This is jnana-sunya-bhakti, self-surrender, is so pure that even connection with knowledge that is considered to be very innocent and spotless is also rejected. Such a degree of self-surrender is necessary for the higher association of devotion proper. Jnana-karmady-anarvrtam, the charm of material acquisition and the charm of mastery, of knowing everything are both rejected. We do not know anything in the Infinite, even in magnitude or quality. We cannot know anything in the Infinite. It is a flow of Autocracy. What can we know?

Knowledge means not to store so many false incidents and sell them to the world for some name and fame. No! That is to be hatefully rejected – given up. But, service – unconditional self-giving – is noble and will take you to the higher, super-conscious region. Jnana and karma are both discouraged. We are discouraged from handling matter and knowledge. Knowledge will not apply in that plane of dedication. That is the plane of Absolute Will, the flow of Absolute Autocracy and no rule or regulation can work there. So, false gathering, false storing has got no value there – no market value. Indeed, no market is there! Therefore, only by self-surrender, self-giving will you have such high quality of devotion. So, a serving, a self-giving attitude is our friend. We are a unit of serving attitude and service means to surrender to the Higher. The Higher means, ‘uncontaminated with material and intellectual acquisition.’ This sort of higher devotion swiftly carries us to His Divine Abode where love, beauty and charm reign supreme.

**A Wonderful Touch**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It cannot be denied that a kind of energy is necessary to maintain one's present position. Some sort of energy is necessary for that, but then we are to give some extra push forwards in order to go ahead, and that is all-important. It cannot be denied that a kind of energy is necessary to maintain one's present position.

Some sort of energy is necessary for that, but then we are to give some extra push forwards in order to go ahead, and that is all-important. A seeker after the truth will search after newer and newer planes, and that will be considered as living and accommodating. We are to become more and more accommodating, earnest and eager. *Sva-dharmme nidhanam sreyah, para-dharmo bhayavahah* (Bg. 3.35). The advice is given: "Try to maintain your position even at the cost of your life," then at the next point, "Go ahead. March on." Why was it first advised to maintain your present position? So that you may not fall back, but that does not mean you are not to make progress in the front. *Sva-dharmme nidhanam sreyah* - Even at the cost of your life try to firmly maintain your position," does not mean you are not to, go ahead.

*sarva-dharman parityajya, rnam ekam saranam vraja* (Bg. 18.66). "Give up all considerations and take the risk of marching onwards." Only to help this, was the first advice given. First, "At any cost you must maintain your position," and then, "March onwards!" These are relative and absolute considerations. A living spiritual conception must be of that type. The dire necessity is that in the background we address the question of how to maintain-and improve-our present position.

**Devotee:** In the spiritual world does everyone hold the position of a Guru for those who enter?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Of course, and whatever little help we will receive from anyone, we must be grateful to him. A person with good temperament must be thankful to all. Receiving even slight help he will feel, "Yes, I am very thankful for your guidance."

We are to learn the theory and science of gratitude. "I am grateful to you and to everyone in the environment," the very domain is of that character. Everyone thinks himself to be a thief, "I am a trespasser. Only by the grace of the environment can I have a position here. They are all well-wishers except for myself," this should be the temperament. He will be busy and sometimes

forgetful of himself in the intensity of his service.

*vaikunthera prthivy adi sakala cinmaya. (C.c. Adi 5.53)*

We are to think, "The environment of that land in which I aspire to live is made of better stuff than I am." We are to enter into a super-subjective domain. The attitude of all the newly recruited persons there should be: "I am not of subjective character, I am of marginal potency, *tatastha*, but I am receiving permission to enter the super-subjective area where everything holds a higher position than myself." Everyone there is of that consciousness. "The air, the earth, the trees, etc. all hold a higher position than myself, but still I have been given permission by the supreme authority to wander here. I have only been given some service, and I am eager to render that service to this land." With this attitude in the background, one should live there, and in the foreground one will become accustomed to discharging his particular duty. "I have come and I am treading on a soil whose intrinsic value is really superior."

A child reveres his mother but he may be taken on her lap, such is the example of our situation when we enter Vaikuntha and Goloka. "The whole atmosphere is higher than myself and is to be revered, but still they have embraced me and taken me in their lap - *svarupa-sakti* - and I have been asked to do some duty there. The whole environment is to be revered, and I am allowed to live there only as a matter of grace, not as a matter of right." We are *tatastha*, and as a matter of right we may be cast in *Brahmaloka*, the marginal potency, so we must become conscious of this fact. Before enlisting our name in the Krishna consciousness school we -must have this primary knowledge. "We are having the chance to enter where? In a revered land, God's throne. Only for a particular service am I entering the temple which holds a superior position. Wholly for service am I entering, and by their gracious nature they are drawing me there. I am being taken on my mother's lap. I take her feet dust upon my head, but she is taking me, including my feet, upon her lap."

**Devotee:** With such bright prospect, why do we sometimes find devotees leaving the Gaudiya missions?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It will happen only if there is something wanting in us, so we must try to keep up the high level we had during our Guru Maharaja's day. It is recorded that the highest test comes when a jiva is passing out from the clutches of *maya* - illusion. At that time the personification of *maya*, *Mayadevi*,

comes with folded hands to pray, "Why do you leave me? Allow me to serve you. I am at your disposal and I am ready to serve you in any way. Don't leave me." She was so cruel to punish them when they were within her clutches, but when they are leaving she approaches very modestly, "Why are you leaving me? I want to render service. Please be with me."

*Pasabaddha bhavet jiva, pasamukta sadasiva-* what was once her prey has now become her master. So the friendly request also exists. If we have real attraction for the higher life, we are to pass that charming aspect which will try its best with sweet proposals and offerings to keep us within its jurisdiction. Such is the nature and we must be aware of it. So, not only "God, save us from our enemies," but also, "God save us from our friends!"

*sadrsam cestate svasyah, prakrter jivanavan api  
prakritim yanti bhutani, nigraha kim karisyati  
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 3.33)*

Nature is indomitable, so it is quite natural that one may fall prey to his own previous nature, but how can we be saved from the results of our past activities our acquired previous tendencies? The key is here: *indriyasyendriyasyarthe, raga-dvesau vyavasthitau* (Bg. 3.34). Each sense has its corresponding external attractive objects. If you can stop the tendencies just as they are beginning, you can be successful. But if you allow them to progress, you will be undone. Only at the starting point can they be checked. If you allow them to contact with the enemy party you are lost. *Prakritim yanti bhutani, nigraha kim karisyati* (Bg. 3.33) - however wise you may be, you will be helpless because maya has such great power. Only if you can catch the tendencies as they sprout will it be well and good, otherwise at the next moment they will go beyond your control. That is the suggestion given by the Lord Himself, "Don't allow yourself in any way to have negotiation with the other party. Try to nip it in the bud. If it is allowed to grow a little, it will be beyond your control." This advice is general to all material nature. So, every event is to be tackled in proper time. Another broad point is:

*indriyani parany ahur indriyebhyah param manah  
manasas tu para buddhir buddher yah paratas tu sah  
evam buddheh param tuddhva samstabhyatmanam atmana  
jahi satrum maha baho kama-rupam durasadam  
(Bg. 3.42-43)*

A royal road giving a very broad and comprehensive control of all evil propensities is recommended here. How to get that relief? First you are to consider the importance of your senses compared with matter; then, the importance of the mind over the senses. Then you are to consider, concentrate and understand the efficacy, fineness and importance of the faculty of judgment within you. Surpassing that, you are required to go higher and search for the cause from which the intelligence comes-its source. If for a second you can have a touch of that substance you will find a wonderful layer that is extraordinary in every point compared with that of the plane in which you are now living. It is so charming and so attractive that it will help you to bid good-bye once and for all to this material charm. If even for a second you can have a touch of that higher substance, the material pleasure will turn into trash. Everything there is wonderful all dealings and experience.

*ascaryavat pasyati kascid enam  
ascaryavad vadati tathaiva canyah  
ascaryavac cainam anyah srinoti  
srutvapy enam veda na caiva kascit  
(Bg. 2.29)*

The unintelligible, charming conception of that high plane will give some particular divine type of prospect that will at once turn all your material prospects into trash. Even if you come back, it still won't have any real influence upon you. Such is the realization of the atma; what to speak of Paramatma: that is more and more laudable and desirable.

*Evam buddheh param .* is the *atma*. In the beginning, with the help of your reason concentrate even for a second there. Your inquisitive ego may even for a second meet with your real self- *jahi satrum. maha-baho, kama-rupam durasadam* - then all the charm for material pleasure, both gross and subtle, will bid you adieu for ever. Simplicity is the first qualification. If you are really simple, or sincere, then automatically you cannot but come under the divine feet of Mahaprabhu, Sri Chaitanyadev. It is so plain and so un-artificial. Love is a plane truth that should attract everyone. "Even more than general love, Divine Love will attract all normal persons, it cannot but be. It is only necessary to be simple and unprejudiced. The antithesis is the only thing drawing us back from God, otherwise it will be found to be the plane of universal love. And 'universe' does not mean to a particular part of the universe, but the whole. Love

is coming from the Absolute. “Is there such a fool in the midst of mortality in this world who will not worship He who even the immortal worship? It is a great wonder that there can be such a person who will avoid such worship just to undergo all the mortal sufferings.”

## **Ambition of Life**

We don't like to live in this material world that is so nasty. We are trying to realise how to live in the land of the soul. We are soul and we should live there.

*yad gatva na nivartante tad dhama paramam mama*  
(Bhagavad-gita 15.6)

(Krsna said to Arjuna: “That is My all-illuminating holy abode from which the surrendered souls never return once having reached there.”  
and:

*abrahma-bhuvanal lokah punar avartino 'rjuna*  
*mam upetya tu kaunteya punar hanma na vidyate*  
(Bhagavad-gita 8.16)

“O Arjuna, beginning from Brahmaloaka, the highest planet in the universe, downwards, certainly the residents of all planets are naturally subjected to repeated birth and death. But, O Kaunteya, upon reaching Me, there is no rebirth.”

It is coming into being, then again vanishing. It is being created, then destroyed. Creation and destruction is the nature of this plane of life, and we must leave this dress and find our ‘soul’ person and live in the plane of soul beyond the jurisdiction of this world. This is achieved by the use of our intelligence and mainly by the causeless mercy of the Vaisnava: sukrti. Sukrti when accumulated creates sraddha for the unseen cause. What is seen becomes neglected, and appreciation grows for what is unseen. The unseen is more reliable. The ‘unseen’ means that which is not under material experience, but it is more reliable than this place of ‘concrete’ life which is sure to go – and not only mine, but

everyone's. So this bogus plane should not be trusted any longer. We must seek somewhere else.

If we enter within our heart we shall find that, yes, there is mind, there is intelligence, there is soul, Super Soul and so on in the subtle world. Whereas this seen world is proven to be of change and destruction.

Our ambition of life is the higher plane of Krsna. We want to live in a country where the general insult and disregard is absent.

We can live an honourable life there. Whereas this plane is sure to go, and we see it every day and at every moment. Yudhisthir Maharaj said, "What is more wonderful than this? Every day we see everything going to the jaws of death, but we are not preparing ourselves for that. Instead our tendency is that as much time as possible we shall stay there."

The whole of our energy we are using almost for nothing. We are using our energy for impossibility. I shall have to leave, and all of us we shall have to leave this place, still we want to give so much attention to building houses and this and that.

For this reason we are making temples, etc., so that in this way so many persons' energy will be used for the purpose of the Lord and they will be saved. Energy should be used for Him, and that is the way in which we can go to His land. All aspects of our life should be utilised for His service and that is the royal road to go swiftly to His domain. The whole energy should be used for His purpose.

Everything is for Him. We must realise this truth. Nothing is for us, and I am also for Him. The Infinite, the Absolute is such in His nature and His very existence, that everything is for Him. At present we are separatists thinking, "This is mine, I may be monarch of all I survey." But this is the anti-current that has taken us far away from Him, thus causing us to become prey to death and disease.

Nabadwip is considered by the high order devotees to be the highest place of theism of Absolute Love. Sri Radhika and Govinda combined Themselves together, and they are avowed to give their dearest thing to the public. As Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu They came here with this idea.

Both parties have the best wealth and They have come to distribute that for the benefit of the public: "Come this way, you will get the highest thing that we taste

ourselves. The same dish you can have. O people, you can have a taste of the same dish as we relish. It is the play of the highest order. Prem. Love.”

Raso vai sah: the Upanisads say that sweetness – rasa, anandam, sundaram – is really controlling the whole creation. Everyone wants rasa, non can say otherwise. From the atheists to the highest order of theist, everyone wants.

If we can develop the eye to see, then every atom of Gaura-Dham will charm us to the utmost. Only the eye is necessary. By charm every atom is sufficient to engage us fully and accommodate us wholesale. One particle of dust can give us fullest engagement because all is infinite and of the most generous type here. All the dust is of the most generous type and promising for Krsna.

Every particle of dust promises to give us Radha-Krsna, so what more do we need? They all promise, and this is the outcome of Gaura-Dhama. No other nature can be traced in them. They are all helping to take us to our highest attainment. Really seeing, it is their nature. Externally according to our anartha it may produce so many tests and examinations, but with the least test and least trouble, they are ready to give our highest goal: the connection of Mahaprabhu, and the eye to see who Mahaprabhu is. The angle of vision is the most important thing, the angle of vision to look upon the environment.

In Vrndavan there are apparently so many demons such as Aghasura, Bakasura, Dhenuka, Vyoma, Arista, Kesi and Kamsa, but they are on the surface, whereas Krsna is everywhere. There is the superficial vision and the real vision. Similarly there is the internal self, and the necessity of that internal self – soul’s necessity – avoiding the superfluous, the surface.

The surface is for our physical senses, and for the mind there is also a mental layer of different types of religionists including so many other religions. But in the layer of soul, when we come to appreciate assistance from others, then we will come to appreciate how beautiful and how magnanimous is the connection of Gauranga here in Nabadwip. How it can enrich our soul! Our soul’s necessity.

**Aparadha-banjana-patha**

**Devotee:** Student: How is this part of Navadvip called Kulia, the very special place, *aparadha-banjana-patha*? Did Mahaprabhu have some special pastimes here?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** As I have mentioned; this is where Mahaprabhu was most liberal in His mercy, to forgive all the sinners. When Mahaprabhu came back from Puri after five years of sannyasa, He first came here. And He stayed at the house of Vidya Vacaspati, the elder brother of Sarvabhauma Pandit, and formal guru of Sanatana Goswami in Vidyanagar.

At that time there was such a rush of people coming to see Mahaprabhu, from both sides of the Ganges, that the whole Ganges appeared full of human heads.

One author has described the scene at the time of Mahaprabhu's return to Navadvip in that way: that the whole Ganges was "filled up with human heads". When I read this, at first, I thought: "Such a description must not be literal; it is a little hyperbolic". But later, when in my own life I saw (Mahatma) Gandhi, when I experienced the crowds that used to follow him, then it came to my mind: "If Gandhi can draw so many men to see him, then what to speak of Mahaprabhu?" There was such love, so great an intensity of love, that at that time everyone, all of the people, came madly to see that great Nimai Pandit.

His scholarship was so extraordinary, and His figure so extremely beautiful, but still so many tantric pandits had been against Him; and so He had left Navadvip, in order to preach. And the people cried, "Nimai Pandit, we have lost our Nimai Pandit..." The whole of Navadvip was dark without His presence. And now, suddenly: "That Nimai Pandit has come back again to us! He is with us, in our midst!" People were mad to see Him; the whole area was drawn irresistibly towards Him. So that author has described it in that way: that the Ganges was "all human heads".

Mahaprabhu came to this place, Kulia; and here all the previous sinners, all who had criticised Him, who had done any mischief, they all came to be absolved, thinking "Nimai Pandit is not a man, a human being..." They came to Him here for their confession, and to get absolved from their sin.

## Are we all students?

**Devotee:** We are all students?

**Srila Guru Maharaja:** My Guru Maharaj (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura) told: "I'm the monitor." We must not be afraid of the eternal existence of our guide and Guru, so we are always student. Always to serve under their direction,

*krsna-prema janme, punar tenho mukhya  
krsna-bhakti-janma-mula haya 'sadhu-sanga'  
krsna-prema janme, tenho punah mukhya anga*

"By associating with the sadhus and gaining their mercy one can get *Krsna-bhakti* right up to the stage of *Krsna-prema*. Furthermore the practitioners very life depends on the association of the sadhus. Without *sadhu-sanga* it is not possible to receive the real seeds of *bhakti*." (Caitanya-caritamṛta, Madhya-lila, 22.83)

*Sadhu sanga* is always necessary, the direction of the *sadhus*, *krsna-bhakti-janma-mula haya 'sadhu-sanga'*: the very origin of *Krsna-bhakti* is in the association of the sadhus. And when you have already acquired *krsna-prema janme*, established in *krsna-prema, tenho punah mukhya anga*, he's the principal part of your transaction, your realisation, your service, and in every case his guidance will be necessary.

So don't try to be perfect, that is the greatest disease. That is almost Mayavada: „I am Brahma - so ham.“ Daso ham, that is healthy mantram, formula, daso ham always. Mahaprabhu says: *dasa-dasanudasah*:

*naham vipro na ca nara-patir napi vaiṣṇavo na sudro  
naham varni na ca grha-patir no vana-stho yatir va  
kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramananda-purnamṛtabdher*

*gopi-bharttuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah*

"I am not a priest, a king, a merchant, or a labourer (brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra); nor am I a student, a householder, a retired householder, or a mendicant (brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, sannyasi). I identify myself only as the servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Sri Krsna, the Lord of the gopis, who is the personification of the fully expanded (eternally self-revealing) nectarean ocean that brims with the totality of Divine Ecstasy." (Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila, 13.80)

That is Mahaprabhu Himself saying like that. For whom? Only for the newcomers, and not for us? **So one who thinks that he's in perfection, on a perfect stage, because he's appointed as an acharya, then he's in the highest position, his position is invulnerable, undisputable, unassailable, if he thinks like that he is gone, finished.**

**Devotee:** Maharaja, we're told that when our Gurudeva used to offer obeisance to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta would say: "*Daso smi.*"

**Guru Maharaja:** Yes, to everyone, everyone, whoever he is, not only his disciples, *daso smi*.

Once it so happened, I did not join the Math but I am coming and going to that hired house in Calcutta. There I saw that he's sitting straight but whoever is coming and bowing down, also he bends his waist and says: „*daso smi*,“ in this way. So it came in my mind that we are once bending our head, and he the saint, he's always bending his head in response to so many, so I should not bow down to him. That was my conclusion, at least I shall give him some relief. So I mentally honoured him and passed away. I put this question to another senior disciple and told him that I did so.

He replied a little excited: "Why did you do that?"

I explained his position that incidently he had to bend down and I thought that that must be very troublesome for him so at least I'll give him a relief. With this idea I did it.

He replied: "Then it is right."

I mentally offered my obeisance to him but not physically, only like this. Then he supported me and said: "Of course if that is your idea you are all right."

So *daso smi daso smi*. Men are passing through his door towards the meeting. There is a seat built on the roof and he's at the door next to the staircase, they are

all going by his front. So anyone whose coming and offering obeisance in return he's daso smi in this way, always daso smi, daso smi, daso smi. Hare Krsna. I am your servant. I am servant. I want to cleanse the temple in your heart. Hari Mandir. The Guru wants to cleanse the heart of the disciple, his Gundica-marjana. Then Krsna will sit there, I must cleanse the heart, that throne. So this is the duty of a servant.

Hare Krsna. Hare Krsna. Gaura Hari bol! Gaura Hari bol! Gaura Hari bol!

### **Babaji is above Sannyas ?!**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It is said that the renounced order (*sannyas*) is forbidden in Kali-yuga –asvamedham gavalambam sannyasm pala paitrkam. However, this refers to karma-sannyas. Karma-sannyas means that you leave everything – and that type of sannyas is not possible in Kali-yuga. It is described in the sastras that in Satya-yuga, as long as a man's bones exist, that is how long he would live – along with the longevity of the bones, the life will be there.

In Treta-yuga, life may be maintained in the nervous system. In ages other than Kali, people could tolerate great penances because their bodies were not completely dependent on food. However, it is stated that in Kali-yuga, *kalav annagatah pranah* – one's longevity depends on food. It is not possible to live without food.

All penances have been especially adjusted for Kali-yuga, and the only continuous fast allowed in Kali-yuga is for twenty-four hours, not more than that. In other ages, at least twelve days fasting was generally done – if a person had done anything wrong, then according to the smṛti-saṣtra, twelve days fasting was the standard punishment for any sins.

But in Kali-yuga twenty-four hour fasting is the maximum, because without food a man cannot survive. If he were to take karma-sannyas while being so extremely dependent on material giving and taking, then he wouldn't be able to maintain his existence. So karma-sannyas – which means to stop totally all activity with this material world – is useless because with complete non-cooperation with the material world, one cannot live in Kali-yuga, what to speak of preach.

But the life of a Vaisnava tridandi-sannyasi is not very extreme. Take prasadam and do service – this is a sort of modified form based on *yuktahara viharasya* – one living according to this principle can take sannyas. We find tridandi-sannyas in the sastra. Ravana, when he came to steal away Sita-devi, came as a tridandi. Arjuna, when he met Subhadra in disguise, took tridandi-vesa. Tridandi-sannyas is in the Bhagavat – the Avanti brahmana took tridandi-vesa and Krsna relates the story to Uddhava. Tridandi-sannyasis were well-respected in the society at that time. There are many types of sannyasis, but tridandi seems to hold the highest position of all sannyasis.

The ekadandi we find in the Sankara school, and in the Ramanuja sampradaya we find tridandi-sannyas. In the Vallabha sampradaya there is no sannyas. But in the Visnu-svami sampradaya, we find Sridhar Svami, who was a sannyasi. Our Guru Maharaj inaugurated tridandi-sannyas extensively in our sampradaya. He filled up the gap by awarding the brahmana's thread and the danda. Varnasrama-dharma is but a step to Vaisnava-dharma. Brahmana-dharma vanishes, and above this Vaisnava-dharma begins. To show that, to preach that position to the society, and to the Vaisnava, he supplied the sannyas order to fill up the gap.

Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada took sannyas from his own guru – who was a *babaji*, which is above *sannyas*. He introduced it from the Ramanuja sampradaya, who took it from the Bhagavatam. Following the example of Ramanuja, he took sannyas from the picture of his Gurudeva, who was a babaji. So sannyas is included there in the genuine babaji order. We do not care for the pseudo-babaji order. At that time he did not find any suitable Vaisnava guru, so he had to take from a photo of his Gurudeva. He wandered through Vrndavan and struck his forehead with his palm. "I came to such a holy place, but I could not find a true Vaisnava here." That was his impression there. That came from his mouth. He could not find a true Vaisnava in the whole of Vrndavan and Navadvip.

He had such a high standard of Vaisnavism in his mind – only Bhaktivinod Thakur and Gaura-kisor Das Babaji. In jyotisa (astrology) we find that where the planet of Brhaspati (Jupiter), has a greater influence, one may take tridanda-sannyas – Brhaspati is the deva-guru. Ekadanda-sannyas is influenced by Budha-graha (Mercury). Mangala (Mars) is very influential with the kapalikas, who are Tantrikas. When Sani (Saturn) is very influential it is favourable for Jain sannyas. In this way it has been mentioned. Brhaspati is deva-guru – his influence is in favour of the tridanda order. Tridandis have much confidence in the society. So in the disguise of tridandis, Ravana and Arjuna went to fulfil their purpose, and Nityananda Prabhu broke the ekadanda of Mahaprabhu into three pieces, and Prabhupad also got some inspiration from there to give the tridanda to his followers; in contrast with the ekadanda which was current in Bengal.

Our danda has four dandas – one representing one's own self, the *jiva-danda*, and the prasa, which is the emblem of cutting the anarthas of those we preach to, as well as those of the disciple. The sannyasi also takes a vow of dedicating three things. They must use their words only for the service of the Lord, they shall not think in an ordinary way, but in the cause of Mahaprabhu and guru, and they will preserve and dedicate their body in the service of the Lord, not otherwise. If they fail to do that, then there may be some deviation. We are to pray for that dedication, to invoke grace, and be forgiven in every case. When we slip and fall down on the ground, with the help of that same ground, we can again get up. Following this principle we are to try.

Prabhupad took the red cloth of *sannyas*. Though Mahaprabhu and His colleagues wore red cloth, still Sanatana Gosvami in the presence of Mahaprabhu took the white dress – the dress of a niskincana. Babajis are the gurus of the sannyasis – the teachers of the preachers, by giving instructions in the form of sastra – the code and the code-keeper. So they are engaged in preparing the spiritual code, and the babajis are in white cloth. They do not advertise themselves as preachers. The sannyasis are not engaged for their own benefit, but for helping the public as much as they can. Generally, the function of the sannyasis is to wander here and there and preach.

So Prabhupad created another batch of sannyasis under the babajis, who have given the directions in the sastra. To carry these instructions out and translate them into action, the next lower batch, the sannyasis were necessary. The babajis are turiya, beyond varnasrama, and within varnasrama the highest section is sannyas.

They are expected to travel through the length and breadth of the country, and to preach the religious doctrine to the people. And that was created by Prabhupad under the direction of those sastra makers, the gosvamis, for whom this religious preachers uniform was not necessary. They are niskincana, they did not want anything but they only prepared the religious code. Our Guru Maharaj wore this dress till the very end of his life. Almost everyone to whom he gave the red dress kept it, up to their last breath.

Only Krsna Das Babaji, who was a brahmachari, and who did not consider himself as a preacher, took babaji, after the departure of Guru Maharaj. One sannyasi, whimsically, took up babaji-vesa for some time, then rejected it and again took the red robe. Also, generally it is not the custom for the sannyasi or the babaji to keep a beard and long hair. But for a particular purpose, for preaching, it may be alright. When Sanatana Goswami approached Mahaprabhu, he had a full beard and He ordered, "Take him to a barber and remove it." Both sannyasi and babaji do not keep such things. So, we do not like to keep beards, but during Chaturmasya-vrata, it is mentioned in the sastra, that we may keep hair and beard. Otherwise, generally not. But still, it is not that if one keeps long hair and long beard he cannot be a Vaisnava. There was one Vamsi Das Babaji, who was an independent Vaisnava.

Our Guru Maharaj also gave respect to him as a Vaisnava, but he had a big beard and did not shave at all. He was very negligent not as a fashion, but he did not allow any barber to shave him, yet he was a respectable Vaisnava. Even our Guru Maharaj had respect for him. If you keep a beard in order to preach (for example, in a Muslim country) for the purpose of your service for your Gurudeva, then that is alright. Nowadays, the Christian preachers are abandoning the gown and just wearing western dress, and the nuns who used to dress themselves very discretely, now dress like ordinary women. They are giving up their special dress, because they do not like to advertise that they are religious preachers – they do not like to show that they are a special group. Adaptability has manifested in this extreme position, so the dress is nothing, but everything is in the creed. What is the principle underlying all these changes in the system of the preachers? The creed is everything and the garment is nothing.

## **Beauty is the Autocrat, Sweetness is the Autocrat, Love is the Autocrat**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Everything is to be enjoyed by the Lord. If we can understand this principle of life then it is our duty to taste only what He has already enjoyed. We are to approach divinity, reality, in this spirit of dedication. If we can practice this habit we can be free from the whole of the illusory potency. All our duties should be done in a spirit subservient toward the Centre according to His direction or at even a higher level of understanding according to His own whims.

The autocrat has chalked out a path and I am exclusively following that path. If we do not follow or if we stand still, that is an offence. And if I go in another direction, that is also an offence. We must follow in the footsteps of that Autocrat. The principal way of upper life is to follow in the footsteps of the Autocrat in a serving mood. This is the real path. All our illusions will be conquered if we can only try to accept this principle of life. If we do not try for this, it is an offence even to our own selves. And if we do otherwise, that is also an offence. This is law above all law. And for our own best interests, we must mark this.

Following His footsteps faithfully, as no other law is possible here, because He is actually the Autocrat. We shall not be the losers because He is a sweet and loving Autocrat. He is the Autocrat but He is sweet. And you will also get sweetness, fulfilment and love by following in the footsteps of that Autocrat. Beauty is the Autocrat; Sweetness is the Autocrat; Love is the Autocrat – and that is beyond all law. We are required by that dynamic character to follow in those footsteps everywhere to the nearest millimetre.

This is the summary of the all-serving principle coming from the lotus mouth of Sri Uddhava, considered the greatest devotee according to the consideration of Sri Krsna Himself. Of course, Uddhava admires the gopis' love for the Lord, but more risk is there in that kind of Divine Love. Their opposition to the sweetness also becomes service in such positions where the servants are crossing the realm of their master. Service, the all-serving principle, has got such a position! Service reaches such a stage of nearness that even the Autocrat comes down to His devotees. Such risky service is possible.

*ajnayaivam gunan dosan, mayadistan api svakan  
dharman santyajya yah sarvan, mam bhajeta sa ca sattamah*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam, 11.11.32)

“In society, one must obey the law. But there is also the possibility of crossing the law to show faithfulness to the king. If one risks his life and reputation in crossing the general law, and thereby enters into the royal chambers to fight with an assassin, then he will be considered the best and most loyal servitor. Similarly, the Lord is saying, I have already ordered in the scriptures, “Do this and you shall be promoted. If, by crossing My previous orders on a particular level, one follows My footsteps, then he is sure to be promoted.”

We shall then find no charm for the temptations that are around us. Our intuition – our far-sightedness – will say to us, “do not follow these travelling phenomenal proposals. They are not reliable, but treacherous. They are like black market dealings with some self-interest for profit and gain, trying to get more than the real market price for a commodity. These proposals will be detrimental for your progressive march towards Divinity. Do not allow yourself to be captivated by these external charms – they are treacherous exhibitions. Only take the prasadam which is enjoyed by the Lord.” Everything should be done with this idea in mind, and this will fully relieve us.

Whatever you do, whether in dress or in food, you are to act according to what is sanctioned by Him – following in His footsteps. We shall always perform everything in that consciousness – in God consciousness or Krsna consciousness. God is Beauty and He is the Autocrat. Whatever our engagement, we shall perform with the help of Krsna consciousness in our heart and divine help will come to us beyond our wildest expectations. Doing nothing or acting without the proper attitude, the proper consciousness, is considered detrimental.

Whatever you do, you should do in the proper consciousness at every step. You should do everything in a legal way in the highest sense of the term. “Legal” which in this instance means He who propounds the law. We shall do according to His will, the will of the autocrat, Sri Krsna. This is the sum and substance. We are to go on with Krsna Consciousness following at every step in this way.

We are to go on eating, sleeping and doing all our duties, but always in the association of Krsna. Whatever we do must be done in Krsna consciousness, otherwise all activities are futile.

## **Brahmanas and Vaisnavas**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Sumati* means a good disposition, but good in its fullest conception must come in devotion to Krsna. Krsna consciousness.

*“dvaite” bhadra bhadra – jnana, sab mano dharma*

The calculation of good and bad in this misconceived area is necessarily all false, wholesale. On the other hand what is good or bad in the plane of Krsna Consciousness, both are ultimately good. Both the opposition party and the substantive party have a good position there, both are efficacious.

Here, if a country is ruled by a good government then we can say that the opposition has got something bad. And where the country is ruled by an evil government then it is likely that both parties will be bad. So we must try to learn what is the intrinsic value of good and bad. Exploitation and renunciation, both are bad, and only service, dedication to the central principle of Divinity can really be called good. And Service is of two kinds; calculative and surrendered.

Surrendered Service is the highest type of Service, and that is found only in Vrndavan. Divine Slavery to the extreme and again to the extreme. This type of Service means to accept Slavery. He is so good, that if we can have the connection of Slavery to Him then we will receive infinite good. Whatever degree of Slavery we will be able to accept, then we may attain such height of goodness. It is quite reasonable. Otherwise we cannot have any entrance into that Holiest Land.

We can gain admission only when we offer our service to the extreme point of Slavery. And that Slavery must of course, be unconditional. It must be very hard to conceive of, but nothing short of that will give us entrance to that Holy Domain. Slavery in that Domain is far, far better than to be the master of this land of exploitation, where the reaction can only be very, very bad. And the middle plane, the land of renunciation is neither good nor bad; it is nothing –

zero – freezing point.

**Devotee:** You mentioned that when Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupad adopted the sacred thread, that previously Srila Jiva Goswami had written that in order for one to become a Brahmin, one would have to take birth in the family of a Brahmin. But later a mahajan would appear who would change this rule. Is it true?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Srila Jiva Goswami has written that the ordinary *sadhus*, the *yogis*, the Brahmins, the Sankarites, and the other schools, have all concluded that by the dint of one's knowledge, one's yoga, or one's devotion, the results of all actions can be destroyed, save and except *prarabdha-karma*, those actions which have determined one's present body and are already attached to that body from before this birth. But the Bhakti school disagrees.

We say that by the power of Krsna-Nam, even the impurity attached to one's birth, race, creed, caste, or any other thing; can be done away with completely. It is not possible by yoga, jnana, or any other thing, but by Krsna-Nam, any sort of impurity can be obliterated, even *prarabdha-karma*. So, when all *prarabdha-karma* is purified, then one comes to the position of the highest birth, that of the Brahmin. Jiva Goswami says that at this point one comes to the status of a Brahmin boy.

But a Brahmin boy is not considered eligible to do the work of a Brahmin, until and unless he is given the sacred thread and mantram. When he is conferred with upanayana-samskara, then only is he eligible to worship Narayan, perform sacrifice, and carry out other duties which only the Brahmins can do. So by taking the Holy Name one is purified and attains the position of a Brahmin boy. But, Srila Jiva Goswami points out, that because we do not find any system to give the sacred thread to those not born in Brahmin families, then they will have to wait until their next birth.

The Goswami admits that whatever caste one may be, if he takes the Name of Krsna then he discards any defects of his birth, and attains the position of a Brahmin lad. Our Guru Maharaj, continuing this line of thought, said there is no harm in giving them the sacred thread, so the custom may be introduced. Our Guru Maharaj, continuing this line of thought, said there is no harm in giving them the sacred thread, so the custom may be introduced. Our Guru Maharaj came to introduce that.

He said, two things are being given indulgence by not introducing that initiation. Firstly, those who receive Vaisnava initiation may think that they are lower than the Brahmins, so they must be encouraged. They should understand that they are no longer in a lower position and that they are fit to do all the various services. Secondly, the so-called Brahmins, who are proud of their flesh consciousness, come to think that those who have got Vaisnava-diksa are lower.

So they are committing offence to the Vaisnava. In order that the Brahmins and other so-called higher castes should not be given the chance of committing vaisnava-aparadha; and at the same time, those who have received the Vaisnava-mantra should not consider themselves lower and unfit to do the worship that the body Brahmins do; for these two-fold benefits for the society, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami boldly came forward to introduce this system. There is no difficulty in the rules of sastra, according to siddhanta it is not wrong, but only there was no system established. Our Guru Maharaj established that.

*brahmananam sahasrebhyah sastrayaji visisyate  
satra-yaji-sahasrebhyah sarva-vedanta-paragah  
sarva-vedanta-vit-kotya visnubhakto visisyate  
vaisnavanam sahasrebhyah ekantyeke visisyate*  
(Garuda-purana)

“The real devotee of Visnu is superior to crores of ordinary vaidantik-brahmins. A practical Brahmin is better than a birth Brahmin. Practical means he who performs yajna, etc., and worships Krsna. Those who worship Krsna with the help of their consciousness will be preferred to those who worship with material things.

Then those who are Vedanta-vit, they think that their goal is undifferentiated consciousness, and if one can have the idea of differentiated consciousness then he must hold the higher position to crores of vaidantik-brahmins – those who are suffering from the disease of thinking that spirituality means non-differentiated brahma. The Visnu-bhaktas who can see the Personality in consciousness, will be far superior. Amongst the devotees, those who regulate themselves according to the scriptures and calculation are of the order of Vaikuntha, and those who can exclusively surrender to the Service of the Absolute Entity with innermost Love and Faith, are of the highest order.”

## Capture the Infinite

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Raghupati Upadhyaya was a scholar and devotee. He came to see Mahaprabhu, and Mahaprabhu enquired, “Pandit, what is your mainstay of life; what keeps you going on?” He answered, “I am a little disappointed. I have gone through many scriptures, but I am not satisfied with them. My finding with the scriptures is mostly this, that those who are afraid of the uncertainty of this mundane life of birth and death seek shelter of the holy scriptures to save themselves.

Those who are too afraid of their mundane life in this world, and worldly affairs (*‘bhava bhitah’*), run to find some consolation in the scriptures, to find if they give any clue, any way, any path to get out. There are various scriptures, the srutis, the smrti and Mahabharata, including Srimad Bhagavad-gita, but generally, those who approach them run there to get relief, being frightened by their present circumstances. But I do not care for that. I do not care for those sastras (scriptures), because I have found the symptoms of my real interest in one place. Where is that?: “aham iha nandam vande yasyalinde param brahma” – I find that unknown and unknowable thing is crawling in the compound of Nanda Maharaj, a cow-keeper!

In the compound of a cow-keeper the ‘param-brahma’ is crawling! This is charming, the most charming of all charms! My heart is sold there” – *‘srutim apare smrtim itare bharatam anye bhajantu bhava-bhitah’*.

It is hinted here that this is in itself the result of what is achieved by following all these scriptures. And Mahaprabhu gave His appreciation of that. In the Srimad Bhagavatam, it is told how Pariksit Maharaj was established in hearing the lila of Krsna and put his question to Sukadeva Goswami: “What sort of endeavour did Nanda and Yasoda make to achieve what so many yogis, rishis, scholars and tapasvis, who all attempted so hard and painstakingly to find out the truth about the soul, foiled to do?”

We tried hard to achieve some very vague connection with that and then were pushed back.” By much trouble and pain (*tapasye tapana*) they push their consciousness high and, after perhaps touching or not touching the verge of that thing, come back down. That is the characteristic of the highest conception of truth, and that thing, that supramundane thing we see sucking the breast of Yasoda. What is this? *Tapo disastanam hari*. That param brahma has come like a child. It is very, very wonderful. How it is possible? Pariksit Maharaj put this question to Sukadeva, the great speaker of Srimad Bhagavatam. He asked, ‘*laksanam karam brahma*? What sort of ‘*sadhu*’ is there, or attempt or aspiration by anyone by which the personal truth can come so near to our level. Within our clutches? It is impossible.

What sort of process is there to attain the truth in such a way? Srimad Bhagavatam has recommended in answer to that: *jñane prayasam udapasya namanta eva*: Abandoning the unnecessary endeavour of discussing empirical philosophical truth, surrendering to self-realised devotees and hearing from them about the Lord, is the basic principle of perfection. And Mahaprabhu came in that line of thought. But there, the worship is all of a negative character, with so much self-abnegation, so much risk ‘all risk, no gain’.

That is only for those who are without envy, ‘*nirmatsaranam satam*’. The test, the proof of this is that those person will say, “Whatever we are searching for, we have come for, that is all-independent, and that is our reward! The reward of all rewards! We are all in Him, but what is our position? What can we do? Shall we think that ‘we have seen?’” Krsna says to Narada Muni, “*naham tisthami vaikunthe yoginam hrdayesu va yatra gayanti mad bhakta tatra tisthami narada* – That is, in the spiritual endeavour of the different classes of transcendentalists, “I am not present Myself there”.

In the Vaikuntha conception, the enquiry after the Infinite where one gets the personal conception of a Master, that the Infinite is controlled by a Master, and of the wonder in that personal conception of the prime cause, Krsna says “I am not there” And the attempt of the yogis is to enquire into the all-permeating and all-guiding potency, in the deepest consciousness, by analysis, analytical enquiry into who is controlling everything from within, and how to trace Him. This is the way of enquiry of the yogis, but Krsna says: ‘*yoginam hrdayesu va*’, “I am not there”. Then He says, “*yatra gayanti mad bhakta tatra tisthami narada*” “But, Narada, I am to be traced where My devotees are singing in praise about Me”. This is a peculiar process.

The Lord gives some hope that, “Without trying to capture Me, they are taking pleasure from far away, engaging themselves in singing about My greatness. They can feel pleasure in that they have got some clue from some agent, and they are satisfied with that; from outside they want to relish My existence, my presence. It is not that they want either to experience the personal conception of the all-controlling aspect of reality, or like the yogis, to enter into the deepest extent into the science of this experience. But only far away, whatever little trace the devotees may have got about Myself, with that capital they engage in dancing and singing, and Myself, I am there.

They get selfless satisfaction in singing My glory; and this is a far higher degree of selflessness, of a type which is found only there, in the singing of the devotees, and not in the enquiry mixed with curiosity about the most fundamental entity which is controlling everything from within, nor in the realisation of the personal creator, who creates and controls everything. That is the principle in kirtan. Gaura Hari Bol! Gaura Hari Bol!

## **Close to Sri Guru**

**Devotee:** Is there any spiritual difference when the disciple is in the physical presence of his Guru and when he is many miles apart?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We can get benefit only through *sraddha* (sublime faith). The position of Guru should not be considered as mundane, it should not be identified with his mundane appearance. Only through *sraddha* are we able to approach him, from any distance. Still of course, by physical vicinity we can get the chance of hearing from him, and of witnessing many practical dealings that may help us on our path with the knowledge of Vaisnava-sadhachar, what should be the conduct of a Vaisnava.

In this way we can have some sort of conception about these things, but *sraddha* must be there. *Sraddha*, or respectable faith must be there in either case – physical closeness or distance is not the question. In the lower stage, physical

nearness has more efficacy. By his movements, his talks, and his instructions we are to learn the spiritual etiquette, and many spiritual ideals which may also become clear in his company. So physical vicinity will be useful in the lower stage, but sraddha must be there otherwise we may commit offence.

Physical nearness devoid of faith may be the cause of offences against Gurudev. Sometimes the senior Godbrothers may be very helpful in our dealings with Gurudev when we are beginners. Sri Gurudev's conduct may not always be very clear or helpful for us, so in that case some senior Godbrother may come to help us and explain his movements and do away with any difference we may see in him.

*isvaranam vachah satyam tathaivacharitam kvachit  
tesam yat svavacho yuktam buddhimams tat samacharet*  
(Bhagavatam: 10.33.31)

“The instructions of the great personages are always true, but their conduct and their practices may not always be useful to the beginners. So the sober person will accept those practices that are backed by his words, understanding that in his higher stage he may do something which may not be useful to those of a lower stage.

He has such spiritual power that what may be seen as a defect in the beginner, cannot harm him in any way. Therefore the fair minded beginners will accept those practices which are in consonance with his instructions, as being useful to their progress.” We should not imitate but rather we should. Not anukaran (imitation) but anusaran (to follow in the footsteps). We must understand the difference.

So faith or sraddha is the first thing necessary for us; then whether we are near or far from our spiritual guide, we can have his connection. Connection in the proper line, that is the vital point; the proper plane which is independent of gross or subtle animation. The energizing plane that stimulates our enquiry about our won inner welfare, that is part and parcel of the quest. Brahma-jijnasa – the quest for the plane of understanding.

This has been given in Vedanta, and when it has come to Srīman Mahāprabhu in the line of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, it is developed to kṛsnānusandhan, the search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Vedānta is the fower, and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the ripe fruit of

spiritual knowledge. That which is somewhat mixed with activity, yajna, etc, in this plane, is found in the Veda. When that flowers in Vedanta it becomes purely conscious enquiry; “who am I, where am I, what am I?”

When the fruit is ripe that develops into utility; that is krsnanusandhan. In Vedanta the enquiry is about the infinite environment, where I am a part only , and in Srimad-Bhagavatam, the nature of enquiry is more developed – krsnanusandhan – “Who is my Master, who is my Guide, for Whom I am existing?” This is the plane of Srimad-Bhagavatam, madly seeking, “With whom may I have the fulfilment of life? Where is that Master of my heart?

I can’t continue without my Lord.” Mahaprabhu came with that – krsnanusandhan – the ripe fruit of the Veda tree, the plane of Srimad-Bhagavatam. Everywhere we are searching for Rasa, for satisfaction. We may undertake this work or that, but the common factor is the quest for satisfaction. Sriman Mahaprabhu has given the plane of Bhagavatam, “Who can satisfy all the thirsts within me?

Where is my Lord, the fulfilment of my heart?” Real enquiry must be for this only, otherwise your enquiry will never stop. When enquiry comes to this stage and we can have proper guidance then gradually we will be taken to Him, our master. Who are you searching for, that Rasa, that happiness, that pleasure? That is your Master, your Guardian. That is not your servant. It is not to come and satisfy you, with you as the master. It is everything to you.

Everything for which you are moving, this way and that, the goal of your enquiry, or whatever you are doing – that is the centre. You are searching for fulfilment, and fulfilment in the highest stage means this – Krsna. Real search begins only when you come across the Sat-Guru, the Krsna-bhakta. Earnest enquiry begins there. Pranipat, pariprasna, sevaya – you must be conscious that you are to be utilized by Him, for Whom you are searching. Only by seva, service, can you be admitted back into that World. From the very beginners stage it is sraddha, faith that can lead you to the great plane, the noble plane.

When I left the mission of my Guru Maharaj, after his disappearance, I came here quite helpless. I had to find my shelter and so I began to search the books which I had. What I received from my Guru Maharaj, I began to research the references in the Scriptures. I tried to dive deep in there, to collect the very basis of real devotional life. I found that it is saranagati; and wherever I found the

verses recommending and relating to that, I tried my best to collect them and compile the nectar in the life of one who has fully surrendered himself to the feet of the Divine Lord.

That is Sri Sri Prapanna-jivanamrtam. In my study I found that it has been mentioned that saranagati, surrender is alone sufficient to produce all sorts of development in bhakti. Nothing else is necessary. So try your best to stick to saranagati, and automatically everything will come to you from the other side. Your business will only be to adhere to saranagati to the most intense degree possible. Saranagati is enough, surrender, and without that no devotion, no bhakti can stand.

The greatness and the substance of saranagati has been sung, praised and appreciated in such a way. The surrendering temperament is the very basis. “I am for you. You may utilize me, or you may neglect me, still I am yours. You may accept or reject me, but you are my Master. You are independent and may deal with me in any way you like. You can put me in eternal hell, or you can take me on your lap. You have every right over me.” With such heart we must approach our Lord.

That is noble, that is Divine. The highest degree of Divinity we can find there. Not only in our own effacement, but in our self-surrender. That is the real expression of the negative towards the positive. The negative cannot exist without the positive, and so too the positive cannot exist without the negative. In the words of our Guru Maharaj, Predominating Moiety and Predominated Moiety. Two moieties, two halves of the One Whole.

One predominating and one predominated; but both have equal importance in their existence. One cannot stand without the other, and the fullest expression of this principle is Radha-Govinda. Our mantram, our Guru-parampara, the Rupanuga-Sampradaya - all are leading towards that. In support of that we find the vatsalya-rasa, dasya-rasa, etc., but the direct lead is towards madhura-rasa.

They are leading us to the full Rasa. All others are partial, subordinate and subservient – supplemental to the main Rasa, madhura-rasa. But that supplemental service is also necessary. Madhura-rasa does not stand alone. It must have its paraphernalia; the friends, the parents, etc., must be around this Rasa. And so fortunate are those who have inner liking for such Rasa. Vasudev Datta has said,

*yadi gaura na ha'ta, tabe ki haita kemane dharitam de  
radhara mahima, prema-rasa-sima, jagate janata ke?*

“If Mahaprabhu had not appeared then how could we sustain our lives? How could we live? What type of ecstatic Rasa has He imbibed that we have been able to have a little taste? Without this our lives would be impossible. Who else could take us to the acme of realisation of the position of Srimati Radharani.

She holds the highest position. She is the greatest victim to the consuming capacity of Sri Krsna. She stands as the greatest sacrifice before Krsna's infinite consuming power. Rasaraj-Mahabhav – the Rasa is there, and She is the drawer of that Rasa from the storehouse. She has such negative capacity that she can draw out the Rasa from the storehouse. She has such negative capacity that she can draw out the Rasa to the highest degree both in quality and quantity.

Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj said, “My Guru is Radharani. She will be very gracious to You Krsna if You help me in discharging the order of my Gurudev – if You help me in my propaganda work.”

*krsna taba punya habe bhai, e-punya koribe jabe  
radharani khusi habe dhruva ati boli toma tai*

“If You seek anything, if You are in want of anything Krsna, then that is the good will of Radharani. And She will be pleased with You if You help me, because I am attempting to carry out the order of who is none but Srimati Radharani personified. So You must help me.” Krsna had no other alternative but to come down to him and help in his propaganda work. He had to come.

**Devotee:** Sometimes we feel like a stone. You speak such wonderful things but we can only sit like stone, like a rock.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Who?

**Devotee:** Myself especially.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** You are like a rock?

**Devotee:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Why?

**Devotee:** I don't know. You speak so many wonderful things that perhaps we cannot dare to venture into that area.

Srila Sridhar Maharaj (laughing): My words could not soften you but rather they petrify you? (everyone laughs) Hare Krsna, Gaura Haribol, Nitai-Gaura Haribol.

## **Complete Dedication**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Quality is necessary, indispensable in Krsna consciousness. Not partial dedication, but in connection with Krsna, the dedication must be of the whole-self, nothing less.

The demand from an autocrat is categorically different. Krsna is not satisfied with any partial service. He wants to swallow the whole thing, not less than that. This is the demand of an autocrat. But He is the Absolute Good, and He is Beauty. He is Harmony. He is the Law. He is everything. But His demand is such. Self-giving, that is the symptom of sraddha.

Otherwise, intellectualism, just reading scriptures has no value. And also the physical association of the sadhu, that also has no value, if there is no sraddha. Insects, germs, and many other things are in physical association with a sadhu. The association through dedication, sraddha, is all important. And sraddha means that if we dedicate ourselves to Krsna, we get everything. We receive whatever is necessary to result in fulfilment of our whole self.

Our Guru Maharaj laid much stress in the service. We were not allowed to read so much even Srimad Bhagavatam and the books of the Goswamis. Go and do service. The serving nature will attract your connection with the real thing. And no scripture, or knowledge, or even close connection with a saint can help, if there is no dedication, self-surrender, self-giving. If I am asked by a sadhu, or by the guru, to read a particular book, that is service. And if I read a book to enhance, or increase, my knowledge, that may be jnana. If I, myself, take the initiative to read shastra, that may contribute to some knowledge, but there is no

service, as such.

As Rupa Goswami states, *sevonmukhe he jihvadau* (to understand Him is possible only through surrender). Otherwise, if we do not approach with a spirit of service, then everything may be imitation. But we don't come in contact with reality. This is the speciality of the Gaudiya Math, ordered by our gurudeva and also by Mahaprabhu and Rupa Goswami. That is the key to Vaikuntha, to deal with the infinite: surrender, service, dedication. Without knowledge and without much energy, one can attain fulfilment. Energy to move the hill, or the mountain, is not necessary. And to read all the religious literatures of the world, just to store them within the belly, that also won't come to any good.

### **The bell will ring automatically**

A typical external was shown in the Mahabharata. Krsna foretold that when the rajasuya yajna, the great sacrifice of Maharaj Yudhistira will be finished; then the bell will ring automatically. There was some bell, and when that bell would ring automatically, then everyone would know that the yajna had been completed, so everything was finished, but the bell did not ring.

Then Bhima spoke to Krsna, "The bell is not ringing, although the whole yajna has ended."

"No, one thing is still remaining," Krsna replied.

"What is that? What kind of thing?"

"The Vaisnava seva, the service of the Vaisnava."

"What do you say? So many munis, big rsis, Narada, Vyasadeva, and Yourself, have eaten and are satisfied. And You say that Vaisnava seva has not been done?"

"Yes."

"Where is that Vaisnava?"

Then Krsna indicated, "Go to the outskirts of the town. There you will find one man of the lowest caste. And he does not go anywhere. He is satisfied with taking the name of the Lord. Going on in his own way, he does not care for the passing of the world. His eyes are always full with devotion."

They went with their chariots to bring that man, and they found an ordinary poor man of the lower class. They wanted to take him to the rajasuya, so they

approached him with folded palms. The man was perplexed: “Oh, so many big men have come to my cottage. What is the matter?”

He was informed, “We have come for you. You must go and take some food there.” What could he do? He could not avoid the situation; he had to go.

Draupadi cooked many palatable dishes. She was thinking that so many rsis, munis, even Lord Krsna have been fed, but Vaisnava seva has not been done. With all her heart’s might she prepared various kinds of cooked food. And the man was given, and he took. But the bell wasn’t ringing.

“What is the matter?” Bhima asked. “It is finished, but the bell did not ring.”

Krsna explained, “There must be some kind of offence committed against the Vaisnava seva. So the bell did not ring.”

“What are you saying? You have some doubts about something, some conception against him?”

Then they asked one another if anyone had thought any evil about the man. And at last, Draupadi admitted, “I had something in my mind: that the man is low-born, I prepared so many curries with utmost skill, but the man miced all the curries together and then ate them. He does not know how to eat because he comes from a very low caste. I had that in my mind.”

Krsna said, “Because there is some contempt for the Vaisnava, the bell is not ringing.”

So they had to go to the man once again, and again he was brought. And this time, all were waiting with great respect when he was taking prasadam. And the bell was ringing with each and every morsel.

Niskincana: he does not want anything, no name, no fame, nothing of the kind. Such a person does not aspire for anything, but is wholesale dedicated to the Lord. And he may be found anywhere, without any show of external grandeur. The richness is of the heart. No knowledge, education, elevated birth, power, or opulence is necessary. Krsna consciousness is so full, so self-sufficient and absolute, that even a particle of Krsna consciousness contains all opulence, all education everything. Service, self-dedication, saranagati (surrender) – that’s what is necessary.

*apicet suduracaro, bhajate mama ananya-bhak  
sadhur eva sa mantavyah, samyag vyavasito hi sah  
(Bhagavad-gita, 9.30)*

You fail to understand, but he is all right. He must be considered a sadhu, the real honest man and nothing else. He has no obligation to name, fame, or the things which attract us. He has self-contentment. Contentment does not require

anything; it can stand alone, that is contentment, fulfilment. Krsna consciousness is so self-sufficient that it does not depend on anything to establish itself, being self-established.

### **Natural humility – that is wealth**

There was one Vaisnava, Vasudeva by name, in Kurmaksetra, just beyond Puri on the southern side. He was a leper – but what sort of leper? Many worms would fall from his wounds to the ground. So that they would not die, he gathered those worms and again put them in the wounds. He was a brahmana. Anyhow, he understood in his internal mind “the Lord is coming and I shall have a chance to have His darshan. Mahaprabhu went there, and after seeing, went away. When Vasudeva heard that the Lord, one “sadhu” of extraordinary capacity, had come and gone only a short time ago, he was disappointed and fell to the ground. “What is that? I could not have a glimpse of that Lord. He came and went away, and I did not have the capacity to have His connection, His darshan.” Mahaprabhu went almost a mile. Suddenly, He felt some attraction pulling Him backwards, and He had to run, run back, and found Vasudeva and embraced him. Vasudeva’s whole body was transformed. The leprous body vanished, and a beautiful one emerged in its place.

Vaisnavas rather feel they are the poorest of the poor. Amongst the humble, they are the most humble. They will feel they are lower than a blade of grass. That is doinya. Bhaktivinod Thakur has written in one place how we are able to measure a Vaisnava. How can we understand?

What is the key to diagnosis? Doinya: humility – natural, real humility. A show of humility has no value; imitation has no value anywhere. Proper humility can only occur when one feels his connection with the autocratic Lord, his master. Then only can he feel humble. The servant of an autocrat has no position, no ego, what so ever. So natural humility is a wealth. What sort of wealth that can capture the Autocrat? The real servant has that position with the master. He is also attracted to that sincere servant. He is not heartless. He may be an autocrat, but He is not heartless. So service is necessary, nothing else. How can we attain that position, continue, and develop? How is it possible? The sraddha will make

us understand. Only one thing is required and nothing else: laulyam api mulyam ekalam. We are thinking that we are such sound devotee, but we are devotees in dress. But the real inner hankering you feel there, it should be wholesale. Otherwise, only want, and you will have but there must not be any adulteration in that wanting; it must, be sincere, laulyam. No complaint can come against you, from any quarter. If you do not want, you don't have. The only price is to really want it. Don't refuse it. Understand the value of it, want it, and you will have it. Sraddha is a real regard to have: this is The Thing, the highest thing, and only that can satisfy my quench, my inner thirst. By giving your small self, you can get the whole infinite. How can we develop that sincere hankering? With the contact of the sadhu and with the help of the scripture, we can try to satisfy that inner demand. The inner demand can only be satisfied by Krsna consciousness.

### **The Greatest Treasure**

This is the justification of the declaration: sarva-dharman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja. (Bhagavad-gita, 18.66) Give up all conceptions of duty, all phases of duty. And "mam ekam," only reserve one. That is my, and your position by nature, by constitution. Try to understand this, and act. "Aham tvam sarva-papebhyo," and whatever undesirable, sinful reaction that may exist, everything will vanish. No repentance will come to you; you will have all satisfaction. This is the assurance. The greatest treasure ever found is so clearly and boldly put. The call is so bold and clear: give up all phases of duty and come to Me alone, and you won't have to repent for any loss. And Mahaprabhu says:

*yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa*

There is no other duty, if you want to do anything good for the world only go talk about Krsna. Try to distribute Him, who can compensate for all other alternatives. Try to distribute that central and absolute thing to help the people, the environment. No other duty will help. Enlist yourself and you will be loved. Your compassion and disposition will increase more and more. So many will be fitted. There can be no holier duty, as He has come in this age of Kali. Mahaprabhu said:

*yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa  
Amara ainaya guru hana tara ei desa*

Accept this because I have ordered it. Know that it is My instruction, so the ego that you have become a guru and are distributing Krsna consciousness, that dirt won't touch you. It is My order: with this idea on your head, go on distributing Krsna. Talk about Heart of the heart.

## **Dawn in the Land of Love**

### Vrindavan The Divine Civilization

**Student:** By following the process of purification, I've been told we can experience the spiritual world in this lifetime. Does everyone who follows the instruction of Guru and shastra have that taste, does it come to everybody.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** There is gradation, variety is there. Some are going on, some coming back, up, down, this way, that way. Some are running away, some are running to the goal. The individual traveller is responsible for his own progress and trouble, sometimes the environment is considered also. From that higher domain we must accept that decision which descends, still partiality may also be traced; whoever has the capacity to receive more, will be given more. To live in that land of love is most judicious for us, for there our life is ensured. If in any way we can secure a place in that realm, we are home.

**Student:** Is duality only necessary for the conditioned soul?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Duality is relative term, but wherever there is gradation, there can't but be duality, comparison, hierarchy. Yet the duality of the conditioned soul is different from that of the liberated soul.

The nature of the Absolute is of an organic whole, it is dynamic, and within it there are so many different sections. Within the Krsna conception we find so much variety according to His temperament and satisfaction. Mallanam asinir nnnan naravarah srinam smaro murtinam. Different parties are getting a view of Him in so many different ways. Just as when Krsna enters Kamsa's arena, they all perceive Him from different angles. Kamsa, the wrestlers, the parents, the

yogis and the residents all have their unique angle of vision.  
Learn to submit and through submission He will come to you. Don't try to understand Him, but approach Him through faith.

*yasmin vijnate sarvam evam vijnatam bhavati  
yasmin prapte sarvam idam praptam bhavati*

If I get Him I will get everything. You will be able to have Him as He wants to give Himself. The smallest drop will quench all of your thirst, so try to approach in the spirit of service. Your inner duty is towards that environment, you can't ignore that.

Love your environment. Sincerely try to love one another and you will find yourself in Vrndavan, Chintamani Dham, the land of Krsna under His guidance.

Just try to find your sweet self within that domain, there you will live in sweetness where all movement is like dancing and speech is a song, the water is nectar and the trees are kalpataru – whatever you like they are giving to you. Your innermost self is entitled to live in that Divine civilization. And the king of that land with all His entourage and paraphernalia are also sweet to the extreme.

The lila (pastimes) of that world are all harmless. In His play, both parties, the victorious and the defeated are both blissful, no loss is possible, no death. Lila means the harmless movement necessary for pleasing, and our provincial interest prevents us from experiencing that absolute current of self-giving sacrifice. We shall be able to go and live in the land of the souls dream, not the mortal dreams of the mind in this sham world, where even good things are bad, but in His world, where even the bad things are good.

You are really a child of that soil, a child of nectar. So let us go to that ground where many more sweeter things are to be found. That home sweet homeland you must remember. Simply to listen to those Krsna lila pastimes in Vrndavan is all that is required.

One minute drop will satisfy all. He is so sweet and just a homeopathic taste won't allow us to withdraw. Such a high kind of sweetness, never to be found in this mundane world.

*adhuram madhuram vapur asya vibhar  
madhuram madhuram vadhuram madhuram  
madhu gandhi mridu smitam etad aho*

*madhuram, madhuram, madhuram, madhuram*

This kind of sweetness by Bilvamangala Thakur is going on and on, it is Krsna nectar to the ears, that can capture all those fortunate souls with just a small taste for it.

Externally it may be like poison, but internally it makes life full of ecstasy. Such is the peculiar characteristic of the Divine love of Krsna. „The sweetest songs are those that tell of the saddest things.“ So painful yet still we can't leave it.

So try not to approach Krsna directly, rather we are Radhadasya, try to enter that camp of Srimati Radharani and there to become adjusted in that particular line of service. Mainly, we are part of His potency, and the whole potency is represented by Srimati Thakurani in its fullest form, and the highest aim is to adjust with Her camp. This is mainly given through Guru Parampara and the mantra given by our Guru. The formula is there and by the formula, we shall give attention to the finest element of that formula. At the same time it is within me, my inner existence, true identity is to be found in this formula given by my Guru.

Who and what am I is all mentioned in the formula, given through the spiritual advice of the Guru Parampara. And we must reach that goal. Through following that line in a strict sense. If i take advantage of the incarrying current of dedication through Yogamaya, I can see Krsna everywhere. If I go with the outgoing current of exploitation, I will find myself in this material world of birth and death. Krsna is there, everywhere, behind everything. With a deeper vision, we will detect His hand in everything. Bhagavatam states that everything is positively good to you.

Through every incident, Krsna's will is approaching you. With sincere attention you try to read your environment like this. All transaction is with Krsna, all affection, no bitterness. Always search for service to Krsna, the heart satisfying Lord and you will find He is by your side. He is waiting with His hankering heart for everyone. It's only imitation love we find here, like Romeo and Juliet, unfortunately, we are mad for that. But how beautiful and desirable the centre and source of all real love must be. Love is personified, how beautiful and attractive He must be. Just as the dogs cannot understand human society, so we cannot see that world, from our maladjusted consciousness.

Vrndavan is where everything is beautiful and all are loving. Vrndavan is where our soul can experience the happiest environment. The deepest conception of our

soul we shall find in that soil, and its highest utility can be practiced in the land of love and beauty, where God is called by the Name Krsna. So dive deep to find the plane of reality, leave this dream world, and find that most fundamental reality within you.

Once when Krsna was a guest at Vidura's house, Vidura was out begging but Vidura's wife was there. Then Krsna came in unexpected while Vidura's wife was taking bath, perhaps she could catch His voice. Their lifestyle was very austere, having no cloth even, and at that time she was forgetful of her position. When she came out Krsna had to throw His own cloth over her body and then wrapping herself with that cloth she came to Krsna. After giving Krsna a seat somewhere, she was thinking how can I serve Him, but all she had in the room was a plantain fruit. So she took the plantain fruit and peeled it and gave the peel instead of the fruit. Krsna proceeded to eat the peel anyway.

Just at that time Vidura and Narada arrived home to find this scenario. Then Vidura cried aloud, „What are you doing, you are leaving the fruit and giving the peel to Krsna and he is eating it.“ But she wasn't conscious of that. Then Narada remarked, „She is forgetful of her own self through the joy of suddenly finding Krsna in her house. She is overwhelmed and lost all her senses. Don't blame her, but our Lord is eating the peel. Why couldn't He suggest to give Him the fruit and not the peel. I don't blame the devotee, but the Lord.“ Then Krsna remarked to Narada, „I am neither eating the fruit nor the peel, I am eating the devotional sentiment that it is offered with. In this way we should ascertain what is what.

*patram puspam phalam toyam  
yo me bhaktya prayacchati  
tad aham bhakty-upahrtam  
asnami prayatatmanah*

„If one offers me with love and devotion a leaf, flower, water or fruit, I will accept it. What is offered does not matter, but if it is offered to Me with devotion and love, I will accept it. I only take that regard towards Me. I eat that, not the outer representation.“

Sincerity is everything, the sincere souls will never be really troubled. By coming to a genuine Guru we can learn who we are, where we are, who is our guardian, who can save me, who is my own and what I want from my inner heart. Why I am imperfect, why I am uneasy, and why I feel no comfort. For all

these answers you must cry out for that, search yourself and you will find help is coming to you through ghose agents from the plane of Truth. They will come and interfere with your mundane predicament saying, „Don't dig your own grave and enter it, you are our own brother, come back home with us.“ This kind of search is helping your own search, eliminating all other proposals that come to take you away from that highest campaign.

Mahaprabhu upon returning from Vrndavan once encountered Raghupati Upadhyaya at Allahabad. The Lord requested of him, „Who is the destination of our serving line.“ He replied,

*srotim apare smrtim itare  
bharatam anye bhajantu bhava-bhitah  
aham iha nandam vande  
yasyalinde param brahma*

„According to my consideration those that wish to extract something from the Sruti, the revealed Truth, being afraid of mortal life, they run after the Vedic scriptures for a solution. But I am not concerned with that, they just want liberation from this normality. Rather my inner thirst is to have the service of Nanda Maharaj. For Parabrahman is there in Braja Dham crawling in the compound of Nanda. I just want to take his feetdust. I am not satisfied at all with this proposal of Sruti, Smriti, Mahabharata, etc.“ And then there is this further development.

*kam prati kathayitam ise  
samprati ko va pratitam ayatu  
go-pati-tanaya-kunje  
gopa-vadhuti-vitam brahma*

„People are so earnestly searching after parabrahman, but who will believe me when I tell them that Supreme Truth is searching, hunting after the love of the damsels of Braja, who shall I speak it to? It is the most astonishing thing. All are searching for the Absolute Truth, but He is searching for these simple girls of Vrndavan. The impossible has come to be a fact here in Vrndavan. This is my finding Lord.“ This, Raghupati told to Mahaprabhu, only a fraction of this type of *sukrti* can take us directly to the centre, eliminating everything else from the list of my search. So that formula from *sukrti* to *sraddha*, *sadhu sanga*, *bhajana kriya*, *anartha nivritti*, then *nistha* and *ruchi*, *asakti*, *bhava*. When we reach the

stage of bhava bhakti then we can have some glimpse. But only then can we be lifted to that plane of prema where we can see Krsna through the eyes of Divine Love and then we may enter *raga*, *anu-raga*, *bhava*, *mahabhava*. Through these progressive stages we must pass, if we wish to live in His Divine civilization.

### **Disappearance of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura**

**Devotee:** Guru Maharaja, can you tell us some things about the disappearance of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** What does she know? How he disappeared? What do you know, I want to know.

**Devotee:** I know nothing, except the year.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** No, what do you want to know?

**Devotee:** What were the circumstances surrounding his disappearance?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** For some time he showed us in his last days that his heart is going to be damaged. Then some sort of treatment, that kaviraji and other party that was arranged. But gradually he felt that he is becoming weak and weak. Then October '36 he went to Puri along with some of us and there at that Purusottama Math on the Catak Parvat, whether you have gone there or not? Have you visited Puri?

**Devotee:** No, not yet.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** There is one sandhill, hillock, there was his bungalow and he lived there at Purusottama Math. And so many of us also went with him. And he was very fond of hearing that sloka of Dasa Goswami, *nijane katim vasam*. Every day that was sung before him and *sri-rupa-manjari . se mora*

sampada, this song was sung by Yajavara Maharaja who came here, lived for some time, you might have seen him (Yajavara Maharaja). And in this way. And then after a month he came back to Calcutta.

We left a party in Kathaka for some collection. Then we got information that his health is being broken day by day. We also came to Calcutta. When we went to Puri at that time one (Bhakti Saranga) Goswami Maharaja there, he was called Aprakrta Prabhu at that time; he was sent to London and in the Haora station his own garland Prabhupada put it on his head and told him, 'Go there, and if anyone desires to take hari-nama I allow you to give that.' Then while coming back, when we got this news from Kathaka we came to Calcutta and found that it was a very stingy winter and treatment was going on. In spite of that, his health did not improve. We are doing our duty, service duty in his sickbed, I was also among them.

My duty was from 2 o'clock at night to 4 o'clock morning, just before twenty-four hour of his departure he called for me and asked me to sing a song, Sri Rupa Manjari . se mora sampada, this famous song which is supposed to be the highest realization of any Gaudiya Vaisnava devotee. Then after twenty-four hours, that is the 1st January early morning he left the world. He was lying and slight jerking, thrice, like hiccup, slight hiccup thrice, and everything was calm. Then of course we, it was in Calcutta Math, Bagh Bazaar Gaudiya Math, a special train from Calcutta to Krsnanagara was arranged, and from Bagh Bazaar Math we carried his holy body to Dum Dum Station and from there that special train to Krsnanagara, from there on the roof of a bus came to this Ghat. From there across the Sarasvati River, and then again we carried by our shoulders to the Math, and there his place of samadhi.

In the morning we came we reached the whole day it took to come from Calcutta to come to Caitanya Math about 7 or 8 o'clock we reached Caitanya Math at night. Then the digging of the grave was begun, we were engaged in that ourselves. Then early morning, of course he was placed on there. I still remember his dignified figure...[break]...he sat in a very dignified position and a very golden color. His complexion was fair, but after twenty-four hours when he was made to sit on an asana, a dignified position of an acarya, he was tall and fair and thin and very soft body. Then of course the salt was given around and then the salt and earth came up to this, his sitting, I came out. I could not stand to cover his head. I came out, and then I again covered, a tulasi plant was put there and we all circumambulated with some song and some reading of Bhagavatam. I

specially requested who was chanting the conclusion poetry in Caitanya caritamrta commentary made by himself. Prabhupada had his Anubhasya commentary of Caitanya caritamrta and in the conclusion he composed that poem, very sweet and very lamenting temperament.

I asked to read that poem of his and it was read. Then Haridas Thakura samadhi description in Caitanya Caritamrta, it was also read. And then circumambulation of the samadhi, the tulasi plant on that. And one gentleman requested me to chant the same Sri Rupa Manjari . what two days before he requested me to sing and I sang. So that song was sung by me and then everything finished. And we are all fasting yesterday, the whole day. And the Thursday before sunrise, one or two hours before sunrise, he disappeared, whole Friday we took him to that math and everyone fasting, even not a drop of water. Then after the Saturday, about 9 or 10 o'clock we took something to eat. Then taking prasada, again their service engagement in Calcutta we had to attend. And a respectable devotee was appointed as president in a meeting so after that again we, at least I and a few, had to go back to Calcutta, to attend the meeting. The whole body was too much tired, that I can't move. Still we had to attend. So many disciples from outside they flocked together, all pale and weeping mood, the whole small area was all filling with devotees. Crying, weeping, in this way. In this way in '36 went away and '37 began.

## **Dissolution of False Ego**

**Devotee:** I talk to people about Krishna, many of the Christians can appreciate. I speak to many of my countrymen. They are mostly Christians.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** You will talk about the ideal, you will discuss the ideal. Your conception is this, our conception is that, and what is the difference between the conception. In this way you can talk.

**Devotee:** When I explain *bhakti* they can appreciate it.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, *bhakti* is a general thing but there is also the type of *bhakti* and the *bhakti* which is the model for all other forms.

**Devotee:** They can understand the focus of *bhakti*. When I talk to them they can appreciate *bhakti*, when I explain it.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Bhakti*, you also know *bhakti*, you are talking about *bhakti*. I am also talking about *bhakti*. Do you find any difference there? So *bhakti* is the ideal and they have got also an ideal.

**Devotee:** But it is the focus of the *bhakti*. I explain Mahaprabhu's philosophy, *bhakti* even above *mukti*.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We are captivated by the ideal, the fine touch, appreciation for the ideal. Mahaprabhu has given an ideal, Christ has given another ideal.

Our inner inspiration, which we cannot trace, the attraction for the ideal we are to analyze these fine things, our appreciation. Why do we appreciate Krishna and not God given by Jesus? That is a vague thing. This is some clear conception, sweet conception of the thing. Why am I attracted to this side? I am to analyze that.

What is there that will be found on this side and not that side? I am to look into my inner heart and try to express that, the difference is there.

In my previous days, generally I used to collect money for the Mission and I met many gentle- man many sympathetic, many apathetic. A sympathetic man asked me, "O, why you are running from door to door for collection when we see that you come from a very high family. You are educated and you are fit. Why do you waste your time by collection from door to door?" I replied, "What do you want me to do for God?" He said, "Go to the mountain caves. There is an arrangement by the religious householders. They will give food to you regularly. Then go on meditating." On account of that request, I tried to look into my own heart.

Why I am doing this service? They are saying sympathetically, "Begging from door to door what good can you derive? Go straight to the hill and sit in

meditation for Him and try to connect yourself in a direct way.” Many times I looked to my heart for the answer and I found it.

I told him do you know the character of the Vedic disciples?

They are sent by the Guru to the pasture ground to reap the cultivated land. What for? Krsna went to gurukula and went with four god-brothers to bring fuel wood from the forest. What is the necessity?

So it is necessary to understand that whatever action I shall begin taking in response of my own ego will create a material atmosphere, spread my subjective atmosphere. But I have ceased to act according to my own inner thought. I have placed myself at the disposal of a higher devotee. The subtle system of my inner body I want to kill, finish, and I have stopped its food. If I obey its order it will thrive. I have stopped the ration. I have totally disconnected the food supply to the army. Let them die fasting and if they die, if that ego will die then another body, which works only in obedience to the higher agents will come out. This subtle body which gets its food from the ego will be finished. I want to do that.

The whole mental system may die without food. No insinuation from my ego within. I am doing what our Guru asked me to do, some service, and I am doing that. I am engaged with Vaikuntha, the transcendental world.

I want to dissolve my ego, and the world produced where I am living by my ego. I want to get out of that. I am living in my own imaginary world. That world must go away. Then, another world will come to me. I am connecting with these material things, this person, this matter, this gross, conscious body and the world created by it, but another world I want to live in.

I want the world of my Guru. I want to live in that way.

Once one *sannyasi*, leaving the engagement given by our Guru Maharaj went to visit Badari- kashram and the holy places. Then he was punished, “Why have you left the responsibility of service given to you and you are going for pilgrimage.”

I was a beginner at that time and it gave a heavy pressure in me, what is this, a *sannyasi* has gone to visit Badarikashram, the place of Vyasadev, Sukadev, what is the fault there? So great a fault that he would forbidden entrance? I was a new man, I was in charge of the Kuruksetra Math and I was sent a letter, "If that *sannyasi* comes to the Math don't allow him to enter." He was a senior *sannyasi* and I was a newcomer.

It was a great shock to me. That *sannyasi* came in a day or two. Just previously, I showed so much respect to him and that day how can I say that, "You won't enter this Math." This was very difficult. When he came; I read the letter to him. This is the order of the central Math. First he was excited and began to abuse the higher authorities. Finally I said to him, "Maharaj I feel much apprehension in my mind and I am very much afraid." He inquired, "Why you are afraid?" I replied, "After fifteen years of service, if you have come to such level that you are to be ousted from the Mission, then what hope I have got? I am a beginner. Your fifteen years service has earned such punishment to be ousted, then what hope I have got here?"

It is not possible for me to waste my time here." Then he came out in another color, "No, no, no you need not to be afraid. I may do wrong. A boy may not pass a B.A. degree or M.A. degree but it does not mean a primary student like you will also fail that." Then he accepted that, "It is not injustice but it is justice and I have committed some- thing wrong." He came to that conclusion. This incident had a great impression in my mind. What is there in this service?

Disengagement, leaving the desired service of Guru if you want to go to a holy place, that is a punishable offence? What is this? This service is the connection above.

God's will through His agent to be engaged in His service is very, very valuable. Conversely, to select in my level what is good and bad and to go to a holy place is some sort of religious luxury, freedom. Divine service is above freedom of an ordinary soul. "It is a holy place and I am doing right visiting holy places."

The origin of this is from my ego and a far higher ego is giving instruction, "Do this! God wants this from you!" This is another world. It came to me gradually. To obey the orders of a Vaisna- va that means to serve Divinity, the higher

Divinity and this will give us the supreme destination. This is the order from the higher plane. We have to follow it.

I am in search after the infinite! Until the infinite comes to me graciously to reveal Himself I must go on searching. It is His pleasure not my pleasure and I do not have anything to force Him. It is absolute and I have come to get a drop of grace from the absolute, not any limited thing. Krishna says, “I am everywhere everything is in Me. Try to understand this peculiar, mystic position of Mine.” Gaura Hari bol!

## **Distribute In Danger**

**Devotee:** This year of 1982 there are many eclipses and inauspicious astrological circumstances have been forecast which indicate the likelihood of natural disasters. Should a devotee in the service of Krsna take these things into consideration? For example, I am due to go to an earthquake-prone area for preaching; but is it important to protect oneself so he can serve Krsna nicely, or should one depend on Krsna’s mercy in every situation?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** In 1927 perhaps, there was a big solar eclipse. At that time the Kuruksetra Math was newly started and I was the Math Commander there. Prabhupad Srila Saraswati Thakur went there and a spiritual exhibition was also arranged. This exhibition depicted how Dvaraka Krsna and the Gopis met. At that time, I first heard from our Guru Maharaj why on solar and lunar eclipses, especially the solar eclipse, people come in lakhs and crores to a holy place and take bath.

I remember his explanation. The planets come in a particular line at that time, and there is the possibility that by increased attraction they may clash and everything may be finished – pulverised by that clash. With this apprehension of a natural disaster, the people try to utilise their time in the best way possible by coming to a holy place, taking bath, chanting the Name of the Lord and concentrating their spiritual activity in what may be their last moments.

According to their religious beliefs they may chant certain prayers or engage in Nama-sankirtana.

So when the general apprehension of destruction comes, whether individual or collective, we shall try our best to utilise our time with the high conception, within divinity. That is very good. It is also appreciable that where the apprehension of danger is acute, one runs there for relief work. That is laudable. Circumstances may vary, and how far the intention is correct in a particular case is to be judged.

When I was in madras, one man came to me and preached about the Ram Krsna Mission's activities. He challenged, "You want to deliver the people, but they are dying of famine and disease. You do not go to help them, but if they die, to whom will you preach? So relief work is necessary. First give them food, medicine and good health. After that you can give them inspiration about God. This process is good. But if they die then who will you help in a spiritual way?"

My reply to him was: "If there is a famine in the country, and I have some food and am distributing it to thousands who are flocking around me, but someone runs away, what should I do? Should I continue distributing food to those who are nearby, or, stopping that, should I run after the man who ran away to catch him and give some food to him? What should I do?" I asked him in this way.

Similarly, men are indeed dying, but there are also those who surround me, ready to take what I have to give them. Why should I interrupt the important function of distribution to chase the fleeing man? I will lose my time by running and leaving the distribution. So many living persons are coming, so why should I be partial only to the dying? There are already hundreds and thousands around me. The very needy persons are already around me. It must be judged as to which policy will be more fruitful.

Of course if there are so many attendants to look after those who are crowded here, then it may be considered that I can go and chase the others and give them nourishment, otherwise there is no need to lose time running or travelling. Our aim will be to engage ourselves always in this distribution. Again, distribution may not be the only work. Some are seen to distribute, some are supplying, and others are cooking. Different functions are necessary to save the people.

Some disasters are acute and some minor, but disasters are always occurring. It is not only limited to the human beings, but so many insects, animals and others are also in need of receiving such vibration that comes from the Divine layer. When Mahaprabhu went through the Jharikhanda forest, even lions, elephants and deer received benefit from His Nama-sankirtana. Nama-sankirtana should be done properly. We shall always emanate that divine energy. We shall try to invite and distribute, as a mediator to draw and distribute. Therefore we shall engage ourselves in the most intensified duty of serving as a mediator. This is the primary thing. "I may be deeply engaged in drawing from the upper layer, and emanate that towards the environment." That sort of high ray or wave is necessary.

Some say that underground towns are being constructed in case of nuclear war. We need to get out of this world of blood and flesh and bones. We are more in danger when we live in this cage. If we can live outside this cage, then we will have no fear. The only thing that is in danger is this fleshy body. The body is always inviting death. This body means an invitation to death. This body is so dear to us, but our real welfare is to get out of this body and not re-enter such a body which is so cherished by us at present. It is with the association of this body that I am dying and in danger. This body is only an outer product, but the mental body is responsible for everything.

We see with the mental body in dream. There is a 'country' where those bodies move and live, with its own government also. That is called Pitrloka. According to Hindu Scripture, generally the departed souls live on the moon. Two terms are used: Uttarayana and Daksinayana. Daksinayana refers to the period ruled by certain gods; during that time, the soul that passes from the body must return to this soil. Such is the karma of those persons. Their mental body is of such quality that it will again come here. After death they go to the moon to take rest for some time. There is also some arrangement in the Sastra to send some food to them. Food is offered in their name, and that food is given to the sadhus, Brahmanas and cows, etc. Thereby, they get that food. The departed souls have left their energy here.

Their heirs take possession of this accumulated energy, and the heirs should offer something to the forefathers by the process of mantram. Such subtle association is there that if it is done under proper direction it will reach the place of the departed soul – the subtle body of the departed soul will receive it. It is taken there by the process of mantram. There is a society of rsis that look after the

affairs of transmitting it to them. In this way, according to their necessity, the forefathers will receive that food from here.

This process is something like sending a money-order from here, India, in rupees.

It will be converted to dollars through the exchange system and given to someone in America as dollars. Similarly whatever I offer to the forefathers will be converted by the rsis to the appropriate need of the souls living there. That place is generally Chandraloka, the moon.

For those whose karma is that they will not take birth here again, they go towards the sun. The moon revolves around the earth, but they cross the limit of the attraction of the earth and go elsewhere to have their life nearby the sun. That is Uttarayana. Light predominates there. Chandraloka is dependent light and it revolves this earth, but the sun is above the earth and it represents light, knowledge.

The souls who go there go beyond the boundary of this earth. They go away in their subtle bodies, never to return to this earth again. Those souls leave earth forever. According to their karma they go somewhere else and live there. But in both cases, this is a relative direction only.

We are asked to have our direction through the sun, through light, through knowledge. Jyotir abhyantare rupam atulam syamasundaram. What is light? In the proper conception light is knowledge. In reality, knowledge is light; ignorance is darkness.

Piercing even the light – knowledge – we shall try to find ‘Syamasundara’. We have to try to seek that through the ‘sun’, through the ‘light’. That is the remote direction given to us by the revealed mantras of the Vedas: “Go to the light. Avoid darkness. Welcome light.” Light is the representative of knowledge. Tackle the knowledge in such a way that you can find a cosmos which is very beautiful and personified as evergreen or kisorā. Satyam sivam sundaram – that is Truth, that is Good, that is Beautiful. We are given such direction in a symbolic way. We are far from that, so for a person in such a remote place a symbolic expression is extended.

*Tad Visnoh paramam padam.* Gayatri is the Mother of the Vedas. In only one sentence the whole Vedic truth is contained: Bhur bhuvah svah tat savitur varenyam: You are in the midst of different stages of experience, ranging from gross to subtle.

Here begins tat savitur – a categorical change (beyond our general thought). That which is divulged to you or makes you conscious of the gross and subtle experience – catch that light which is showing these things.

Light does not create a thing. Light shows a thing. Knowledge is showing, so try to achieve that type of knowledge which is showing. That is, go to the subjective aspect of things. Try to catch the one who is showing, that is consciousness. Not what is being shown, but who is showing. Try to enter into that subjective realm if possible. There you will find the illuminator – savita – that which is giving birth to all this material experience. The light. The sun is giving birth to all this by sending his ray. The universal subject is helping your dependent subjective identity to see and experience this world. Try to connect with that.

*Varenyam* – then, try to trace some respectful, reverential cause. Try to go beyond that which is showing everything to you, that grand super-subject, and find the world on the transcendental side, the upper side. There we will find varenyam: that is, varaniya, puja, a venerable world. Here comes the question of submission and devotion. It is not only light, not only knowledge, but there we will find that a venerable plane is on the other side, which we should serve, worship and respect. *Varenyam bhargo*: it is full of all knowledge but it is mixed with veneration, devotion, dedication and worship. That world is of such nature. *Devasya dhimahi*: and we should try to exert all the nerves of our conscious selves to that.

The root meaning of Deva is ‘He who is very beautiful and playful.’ His character is dynamic, not static; a character of Lila and saundarya – beauty and pastimes. Thus *bhargo devasya*, His *bhargo* – His paraphernalia of venerable and knowing substance.

*Dhimahi*, *dhiyo yo nah prachodayat*. If we use our venerative, knowing faculty, we will embrace that. If we can engage ourselves in that endeavour, the result will be our increased capacity to go higher and higher in that direction. There will be no other remuneration for such an endeavour.

This is the substance within Gayatri, which, in a nutshell, is considered to be the Mother of the whole Revealed Truth.

In *Srimad-Bhagavatam*:

*dhamna svena sada nirasta-kuhakam satyam param dhimahi*

Here also, Gayatri says, 'dhimahi'. 'Dhimahi' means chidanusilana or spiritual cultivation. In that stage it will be venerable, spiritual cultivation.

Dhamna svena sada nirasta-kuhakam: by the halo of that noble substance, all misunderstandings will be cleared and we shall have the connection of the real Truth as a whole. In addition, we shall be blessed by the higher rewards of our attempt when properly guided in that direction

.*Satyam param dhimahi*: it is the realm of prajñana (*prakṛsta-jñana*), the mystic, higher, inconceivable, conscious experience. It is proper knowledge in the universal characteristic, and whatever we find in this world is defective knowledge.

Gaura Sundar! Gaura Haribol!

## Ekadasi

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Ekadasi is considered to be the favourite day of Kṛṣṇa, when devotees refrain from material activities. Ekadasi is *apṛakṛta*. *Apṛakṛta* means which is like *prakṛta* but is supramundane. We are warned that Ekadasi is not mundane, though it seems to be. Because it is influenced by the moon,

Ekadasi seems to be mundane. The heat of the world, and the watery portion in the body increases due to the influence of the moon just as the high tide and low tide of the ocean are also effected by the moon. As we approach the full moon and the new moon, the watery portion of our bodies is enhanced by the movement of the earth, the moon and the sun, and thereby the enjoying spirit is also developed.

So, fasting is necessary to meet with that external movement of nature. Fasting can save us from that peculiar reaction. Fasting has been recommended, and

especially, if one can't fast at all, then one may take some process of diet that will give less cause for excitement, therefore one may take anukalpa (non-grains). We fast to check the senses, because the senses by the natural flow become more intense at that time. The result is, that one will be excited and want to enjoy - to encroach on the environment. So this unfair encroachment of one's own self is to be controlled, therefore this fasting has been recommended - this is one way.

We take some types of food, and not others, because they are considered to be less injurious, and less exciting to the body. Also it is mentioned in Hari-bhakti-vilasa, that some particular sins are fond of taking shelter in those foods that we reject. Papa means a type of sin that is very fond of taking shelter in grains and those places which we surely want to avoid. First-class fasting means without even taking water (nirjal). Those who cannot do without food, may take fruit, roots, and milk.

Also, from the spiritual perspective, Krsna Himself also feels more necessity for enjoyment, and when Krsna feels more necessity, the devotees have a greater chance to offer service. The time is more valuable for them, because Krsna wants to enjoy, and at that time, devotees should be busy to supply the things for His enjoyment - so much so that they won't have any time for their own necessities. So, the first reason is to please Krsna and the secondary reason is, that by fasting, we can make our body dry and so our enjoying spirit will be lessened. This is the general explanation. There are so many other things also. Everything is conscious, everything is personal, and Ekadasi has her own personal character, and she devotes herself with all her company in the service of Krsna.

She does not take any food or anything else, and also does not allow others in her group to take food or waste time, but is always engaged in the service of Krsna. We are told that Ekadasi and Dvadasi are favoured by Hari - the underlying cause is already explained. Hari will be pleased with any small service performed on these days. So, Dvadasi and Ekadasi are both considered the favourite days of Krsna. Ekadasi observance is compulsory - though Dvadasi is also honoured as the favourite of Hari, still Ekadasi has preference. Dvadasi has preference over Ekadasi only in eight cases, determined by the combination of nakshatra, tithi, etc. - when we observe Maha-Dvadasi and not Ekadasi.

On Ekadasi and Dvadasi, even a little service gives some greater remuneration.

Remuneration means that our serving attitude and our earnestness will be enhanced at that particular time. In deeper sense, this means that Hari at that time want to accept more service. That is the fortune of the servitors, that Hari demands more of the servitors, so the importance for the servitors increases at that time during Ekadasi and Dvadasi. Also on Dvadasi, we do not pick the leaves of tulasi because it is considered that Tulasi-devi has observed fasting on Ekadasi.

It is also noted that service is the first consideration. If I fast and do not take any water, then I may have to lie down and not be able to do any service to the Lord. That is not desirable. So, to take anukalpa and do service to the Lord is better.

Service is better than sitting idly. So, if prasada-seva is taken as service, this is best. But at the same time, the individual position of a devotee should be considered. The Sahajiyas do not observe Ekadasi fasting at all. They say, "Oh, we are in Vrndavan - no fasting here!" But Srila Prabhupad did not like this - the Sahajiya, in the name of *krsna-bhakti*, goes on feeding the senses. But when necessary for the service of Krsna, to keep up the body, we take prasadam - we don't like that by fasting the loss of energy may occur. In this way we honour Ekadasi. If fasting does not hamper our service, we may go on fasting.

Once on Janmastami day, Hayagriva Brahmachari (the later Madhava Maharaj) had to arrange for Prabhupad to go to Mathura, in order to observe the Purusottam-masa. Hayagriva was sent one day earlier to hire a suitable house and that day happened to be Janmastami. Prabhupad asked his own cook to feed Hayagriva rice on Janmastami day. "He will have to take a tedious journey and his energy will be wasted - he has an important duty to arrange that house there." That was his order. But Hayagriva hesitated and the cook also hesitated. Anyhow, he did not take rice on Janmastami - instead he took sabhu (tapioca), plantain and curd.

However, if Professor Sanyal had been in such a position, he would have certainly taken rice - he was so much adherent and extremely submissive to Prabhupad's order. He would have said, "Oh Prabhupad has asked me to take rice - I must take rice!" That was his line of thought. But Hayagriva hesitated, "No, no, it is not necessary, I am strong enough. I can do my duty." Also, when Prabhupad wanted to eat something on fasting days, he would take *anukalpa*.

My Guru Maharaj felt that you will get the maximum energy if you take good

food and you do good service. That was his maxim. Krsna is not a liquidated party. Take full prasadam and do full service. Whatever is necessary, take it for the cause of Krsna - not for your own cause. You are Krsna's, so if you grow weak and your service is hampered, then you will be the loser. "Better that my soldiers are well fed and working well." That was my Guru Mahara's principle.

## **Eternal relationship**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** One must be given admission, in order to enter into the Lord's own family of servitors. That is *diksa*, initiation. Through *diksa*, one receives *divya-jnanam*, divine knowledge, enlightenment; he can understand that "Krsna is my Guardian, He is my all-in-all." And leaving all other duties, one promises to go towards Krsna, for His service. The function of *diksa* is to impart such knowledge.

And the disciple himself also invites this knowledge: "I belong to Krsna, wholesale. I am His property, He can use me in any way. I am not free to leave Him; my fate is all within His service, within His area of service, and not outside."

Krsna Himself gives us this assurance: "You are My own. Your interest is My interest; My interest is your interest. We are one and the same, there." And Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu tells Sanatana Goswami:

*diksa-kale bhakta kare atma samarpana,*  
*sei-kale krsna tare kare atma-sama*  
(Cc. Antya. 4:192)

"At the time of initiation, when a devotee fully surrenders unto the service of the Lord, Krsna accepts him to be as good as Himself."

The Lord accepts us as His own, and takes the responsibility of everything for us, good and bad. And according to our surrender, such kind of consciousness

also comes, it awakens, in us. *Divya-jnana* is real knowledge; it is proper knowledge, absolute knowledge, independent of all our different interests, our separate interests. From the absolute standpoint, He has got full right over everything, and over me also; and from my side, I also will think I am to be used by Him, exclusively, and by none else— this sort of transaction, is *diksa*. *Divya-jnana* or divine knowledge, the divine conception, means to understand this and to do accordingly. Without this, we are suffering from *avidya*, *ajnana*— from ignorance, from a false notion about the environment. We are ignorant of the proper estimation of the environment and ourselves.

What is the cause of this? It is separate interest. I have got separate interest, and so many others have also got their separate interest, so there are many interests, not harmony in One, the One interest, Central interest. This is at the root of our *ajnana*, our ignorance. And when we are conscious of the common Centre, and that the Centre is good— it is Home, it is beautiful, it is sweet, and all such things— then we get a proper estimation of our connection with the Whole; we get *divya-jnana*, real knowledge, divine knowledge.

**Devotee:** What is the meaning of ‘eternal relationship’? It is said that the disciple is eternally related with his guru. When one takes initiation from guru, is that relationship eternal?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** First we must understand that our existence, the very nature of our existence, is as potency- that is, subordinate, of subordinate character. The soul is of marginal potency, *tatastha-sakti*, and as such, no direct connection with Krsna is possible in our constitutional position. But only through some agent- through guru, the Lord’s representative- we are to have His connection, and not directly. Since we are *tatastha-sakti*, since we come from the marginal potency, we must connect with Krsna through His internal potency. In the internal potency, all are serving the Lord permanently, eternally.

And in that internal potency, there is gradation. There we find conception of personality, and also hierarchy: those very near to Krsna, those still closer, and those closest; and those who are a little far from Him, and further still. There is a hierarchy in this way, just as in a beaurocracy all are not very intimate with the king, but some are near, and others further away. The internal *sakti*, the potency, of Krsna, is like this: the nearer to the Source, its intensity is increased, progressively.

Just as near the sun, the heat is more, the light is more, and the further away, though there is still light and heat, their intensity becomes less and less, so similarly, near Krsna there is more serving spirit, and further away from Him that tendency becomes lessened- in serving, in affection, all such attributes. Krsna's internal potency is such: the nearer to the inside, to the Centre, there is more interest for the Centre, and further away that 'Central interest' becomes less, it becomes a little slack. All those of the internal potency are subservient to their higher service-group; but the intensity of service-attachment may be more, or less. Such hierarchy is there. And the Lord Himself is in the extreme position- He is an Autocrat. We are to adjust ourselves with such an Autocratic Centre.

We must be prepared for anything: anything from the environment may come to us, but we are to face it with optimism. That is the key to success in our life. The highest advice is given in Srimad Bhagavatam:

*tat te 'nukampam susumiksamano  
bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam  
hrd-vag-vapurahir vidhanam namas te  
jiveta yo mukti-pade sa daya bhak*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10:14:8)

“One who, in the hope of achieving Your grace, tolerates all kinds of adverse conditions due to the karma of his past deeds, and passes his days practising devotion to You with his mind, words and body, is truly eligible for becoming your unalloyed devotee.”

We have no ability to interfere with the environment; to do so will only be a useless waste of energy. Rather, we must try to correct ourselves, so that we can adjust with the circumstances we find surrounding us. We have been advised that the best estimation we can make about the environment, of what is coming to me from the environment, is to see it, to understand it, as a grant.

A grant means something which is given. But from where is this grant coming? It is coming from my Lord; and He is my Guardian. He is Supreme, He is Autocrat. So, what is coming from Him is His grace. We are living by His grace, always, and not as a matter of 'right'. That we are living at all, that we are alive, we exist- this is not our birthright! If we exist at all, or not- it does not matter to the Infinite Whole. So, *tat te nukampam susumiksamano*: whatever is coming, it is His grace, it is not earned by my right, my ability, or my qualification. All and everything that is coming, and every part of it, is a grace coming to me. Our well-

guided estimation about the environment will be such.

And we must be satisfied with whatever grant we get. It is not a matter of right; we are not to see with the eye of any right, whether we are getting our own 'quota' or not. "Am I getting my own portion, my own share?"- this should never be our attitude. At the same time, we must try to see that whatever trouble we find, is self-acquired: "Due to my own defective position, I am in such a condition. I am so low, so mean." And our vanity will have to disappear forever, when we realise fully our dependence on His grace: "I have got no position; I am fully dependent on His grace. My whole existence, whole prospect, everything- it is only on account of His grace."

Mahaprabhu said, *krsnera nitya-dasa*: consider yourself, know yourself, to be the slave of the Supreme Lord. A slave has got no rights; he is property, the property of another. Like animals who are someone's property- like cows, or cats, or dogs- our position is such. The slave has no rights; but at the same time, by his master's grace, he can enter the highest place, highest position. Such is the prospect of the slave of the Supreme Lord, of Krsna.

And it is possible only through service. Service means, to satisfy Him- not to satisfy me, not service for myself. But when I am determined to exist only for Him, to maintain my existence for Him, when I can think: "I am for Him, and everything is for Him"- then I have got some position. As Hegel told, "Reality is by Itself and for Itself", so, everything is for Krsna, it is for Himself; and when I am for Him, then I have got some position. And as much as I can dedicate myself to Him, to being for Him, so much of a concrete or substantial position I may acquire. My position depends on my rendering sincere service to the Prime Cause. Mahaprabhu said:

*jivera 'svarupa' haya- krsnera 'nitya-dasa'*  
*krsnera 'tatastha-sakti', bhedabheda-prakasa*  
(Cc Madhya 20:108)

"It is the living entity's constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Krsna because he is the marginal energy of Krsna and a manifestation simultaneously one with and different from the Lord, as a molecular particle of sunshine is one with, and different from, the sun."

The soul is of the marginal potency. From the independent standpoint, it can be

seen that he has something in common with the Lord, and something different from Him; and such a position is inconceivable. Krsna is all-in-all, and the soul has a dependent position, as His potency. The Owner is He, and if we are conscious of that fact, we can thrive. We can improve our position, and we may also get the higher position, we may enter into the higher, most confidential service, only if we can satisfy the permanent servitors of that highest conception.

Who is the highest servitor, Who can serve Him best- they should be the subject of our highest reach. Our aim should be to enter into Their group. And that is Radharani's group. To enter into Her group, Her camp, Her association- that is radha-dasya.

Service is our life, it is everything for us. We thrive only there. And whenever we want to do the work of a master, we deviate from that; we go away, we degrade. By serving, we live, and by trying to make ourselves master, by lording it over others, we die.

So, you will have to 'die to live'- by dying to your false ego, your self-aggrandizing tendency, you can live, live in the world of service, divine service. Everyone is trying to live in this world avoiding death, physical death. They are trying to 'live without death', and that of course is not possible. Just as it is not possible in the ordinary sense to live without death, so you also, who are aspiring for divine life, don't try to live, without death! Die now! Die, to both your exploiting and renouncing tendencies, to really live in service divine.

Don't try to live in the plane of exploitation; that type of 'living', in our estimation, is to face death. But to die for Him, for Krsna, is really to live. The position of the Centre, and our relation with the Centre, is such. The Hegelian theory, that we should 'die to live', because 'Reality is by Itself and for Itself'- it is very applicable in Vaisnavism.

Our false ego should be dissolved, and the ego of self-searching should awake. And, God-searching is self-searching: to search for Krsna is really to search for our own interest, our own higher interest. If you search for Krsna, your own searching-interest is also included therein, it is represented there. So, only search for Krsna- and with the spirit of service, not with the spirit of enjoyment.

The ego, the false ego, must be dissolved. *Bhidyate hrdaya-granthih*: there is a knot in the heart, and it must be cut asunder (Sri.Bhag.11:20:30) 'Ego' means, the stored collection of separate interests of different types. Just as when an aeroplane has crashed, the authorities search in the wreckage, trying to find the

‘black box’; the record of the aeroplane’s entire flight is there. Similarly, our material ego is like our black box; our ‘plane’ is passing through different lives, but the box is there, with the recording. There we can trace in a person from where he is coming, and to where he will go.

His karma is recorded there; the result of his karma in its most subtle form is reserved there, in that recording box; and examining that, it can be understood where from he has come. There are specialists who can read: “O, he came from the tiger species”, or “He came from an insect”, or “He came from the horse, his previous birth was as horse”; or from some other section, other species. And they can also see: “It is possible that in his next life he will have to go to such-and-such place, his destination will be there.” This can all be traced, in the ego.

And that ego should be totally dissolved, so that our soul’s future destination will be in the spiritual existence, and nowhere in the material world. There are so many planes of life in the world, in the universe of three dimensions- bhur-, bhuvah-, svah-, maha-, jana-, tapa-, satyaloka- but our goal, our destination, should not be in any of them. Neither should we go to viraja, the area beyond all the qualities of material nature, nor to brahmaloka, the non-differentiated world of spiritual light. Our aim will be only: “I want to have a ticket for Goloka, for Vrndavan. I want to go there to live; I have heard, and I feel, that there is my true home, the home of my previous generations...” Such kinds of feelings will come in us. When our inner self will awaken, we will feel, “I only want to go there.” And Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu, they are distributing the ticket to that land.

The inner liking is rucih, taste; taste is the vital unit, and not knowledge, not the brain. Mahaprabhu gave recognition to the inner taste. That is our capital. That is the realm of the heart; there the brain has nothing to do, no function.

The brain may sanction something, but the heart may take me towards some other direction; in this way we are generally guided by our heart, not by our brain. Brain cannot control everything; to a certain extent only, it may do so. But heart is the innermost guiding principle; the taste, inner taste, is guiding us, it guides us to our goal. So, we must be more concerned with that.

To improve our taste, we only need good association- association with the sadhus, with those who have got Krsna consciousness within them. In the world of devotion it is not the brain that is valuable, but earnest, sincere hankering for

Krsna. And Krsna is Reality the Beautiful. But He is also Autocrat; that must also be our consideration, that the highest cannot be subservient to anything. This is clear, and reasonable also: because Krsna is the highest, because He holds the highest position, He should not be dependent on any other thing. And yet, He is dependent: He is dependent only on those who have that very conception about Him- that He is the highest. With them, naturally 'oneness' is there- the common interest binds them together. There is binding, attraction- the Attractor and the attracted. And Krsna is all-attracting.

There is Krsna, and His own. And when we have some connection with a real devotee of Krsna we have got a tangible position. Otherwise, we are nowhere, we are lost, lost in the infinite. But whenever we come in contact with a devotee, with an agent of His who is moving here in this world for His interest, then we have found some substantial position.

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavan jiva  
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde paya bhakti-lata bija*  
(Cc Madhya 19:151)

“Wandering throughout the material universe, the very fortunate living entity who receives the grace of Guru and Krsna receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.”

We are wandering endlessly in this universe. When we come in connection with a devotee of Krsna, then we get some hope, some support- some safe position.

Without such substantial connection, we are lost, lost in infinity. Then all our movement here- from where we have come, to where we are going, what we are doing- all is going on endlessly, but to no point, to no good. When connected with local interest, such movement has got no value in relation to the Infinite, the interest of the Centre. It is like a ball being kicked: with one kick the ball is running in one direction, with another kick it is going a different way; kicked from different directions it is going now this side, now that. Our position is like that: a ball under the kick. But when we come to have association with one who has got some substantial connection with the real Centre, then we have acquired some tangible position; we are counted within the calculation from the Centre, we have got some position there, we are traceable. Otherwise, we are nowhere, we have no position. Our position is untraceable; we are wandering, passing through the universe in such a way.

This is the position of all souls within the universe. From this viewpoint even Brahma, the creator of this material world, has got no tangible position. The position of Guru Brahma, of Brahma in his function as Guru, that has a different consideration; but Brahma in his general function as the creator of any solar system, may not have any tangible position in the universal calculation.

When Brahma approached Krsna, to meet Him, Krsna first sent His servant to ask him, “Which Brahma has come?” And Brahma thought, “What is this? Is there any other Brahma? I am all-in-all, the creator of all and everything, whatever we see, we feel.” Still, he had to tell Krsna, through His servant, “It is the four-headed Brahma, father of Sanaka, who has come to meet You.” Then he was taken inside the hall, and He was filled with wonder at what he saw there: “O, so many Brahmas are here! Hundred-faced, thousand-faced, million-faced Brahmas are here, and with their big and gorgeous figures they are commanding bigger, greater universes than me. The creators of so many greater solar systems are here!” He was astonished.

So the Infinite can accomodate everything. And we are to make some tangible connection with that Infinite, we are to find some substantial position in relation to Him. But what direction will we take to go there? How are we to make such progress? It is only through love- love and affection.

Affection is beyond calculation; it is existing in a plane beyond calculation. It is that force which is controlling without the need of any brain: a kind of intuition. The affection of the mother for the child- it is found everywhere, even in the birds, the beasts, the insects. The parent bird comes with some intuitive affection for the fledglings when they are growing, to feed and nurture them, then she goes away. In this way the intuitive force of affection is going on, to conduct the world’s affairs. It is unaccountable; from where it comes, we do not know, but it comes to do the duty, the service, and disappears. That sort of tendency comes from the area of affection, of love. And we are to take shelter under that wave, wherever we find it available. That can help us in such a helpless condition as we find ourselves, wandering throughout creation.

And the human brain, when misdirected, is going to destroy the whole world by inventing atomic energy! The discovery of atomic energy, for mass destruction. We are so ‘civilised’, in the negative side. But civilisation in the negative side is suicidal. To kill one another- is such civilisation a development? Should we call this improvement, or development? It is rather the product of the satanic brain.

Satan is not a desirable thing; it is an indirect, undesirable force. Killing, destroying, destruction- it is satanic activity. Those of such satanic brain are agents of destruction.

But the constructive thing is affection, love, sincerity, self-giving, surrendering. All these are based on surrender; love is always based on surrender. And that high thing, that noble thing, we shall try to imbibe. The most noble thing is self-giving. To give is nobleness; to assert, to exploit, is satanic. And to surrender for higher things, is godly.

And, further, Mahaprabhu also told, “Who are you, to give? Already you belong to Him. And how do you belong to Him? Not by any contact, but by your nature, you are a servant. You are krsna-dasa, a slave of Krsna. By your very existence, you are subservient to Him, you are His servant- that is your nature. And you want the opposite thing: you want to become a Krsna, to become a God, you want to take His position?

Your aspiration is just the opposite, and because you cannot thrive in this attempt, because you cannot become that Krsna, then you want to commit suicide, to enter the renunciation zone; you want liberation, mukti. You want to enter into the non-differentiated area and to never rise from there again, to enter eternal slumber, samadhi, brahma-sayujya- all these unnatural things. But come forward in the natural way, knowing that you are a servant, and in that position you will thrive.” This is Mahaprabhu’s advice.

We are so much accustomed to getting our interest satisfied in the world of exploitation, we are so much conditioned in that attempt, that we cannot think that, really, it is by serving that we live. By dying to our concocted self as an exploiter, we can live: this very thing we can’t understand. By giving we get, we thrive, and by taking we go down, we lose. But we are so much conditioned in the thought of the opposite thing, that by amassing, by gathering everything to ourselves we will become big, we are unable to think how it is possible that by dissolution, by giving ourselves, by offering ourselves, we can be greater, more noble. But the solution is in that very thing: we must die, to live.

*bhidyate hrdaya-granthis, chidyante sarva samsayah  
ksiyante casya karmani, drsta evatmanisvare*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 11:20:30)

“When the soul directly beholds Me as the Supreme Soul within all souls, the knot of mundane ego in the heart is pierced, all his doubts are destroyed, and the chain of fruitive actions is annihilated.”

When our whole ‘separate-interest-box’ is dissolved, we will find ourselves identified with the same interest as our Lord; that we share the same interest, common interest, with Him. We will feel: “My interest is one with His, and according to my might, I am to do my duty.” That is normal life; it is a life which has got recognition as normal, in relation to the Organic Whole.

And the attempt to properly adjust ourselves, is also a very important work in our striving to arrive at the conclusion of our life’s purpose. We must consider: “How are we to utilise ourselves?” We are presently in a perplexed condition, and perplexity means dissatisfaction with our present circumstances. How to find out how I can be utilised in the service of the Lord? This requires from us proper adjustment.

If the Lord says to us, “Take your seat here”, but I want to run hither and thither for some other services, but still the Lord says “No, you stay here, sit here, by my side”- what should we do? Should we sit, or say “No, I want to do some work?” We will have to sit as He has asked, to satisfy Him.

And yet, this is also one kind of temperament of a devotee: “I can’t sit idly by Your side, some sort of service I must be given, must be given to me”; and that also is not to be rejected, in every case. The main principle is that in the good connection, everything may be good. It is the connection which is all-important: Krsna’s connection, Krsna consciousness. In different ways, different persons may go on with their service. It is not that everything must be stale or stereotyped.

Our sincere attitude for the truth is what is all-important. Our searching mood- krsnanusandana, to search for Krsna, and none else- such temperament is very valuable. “I am not satisfied by this thing or that, by so many things, but my heart, high heart, is aching for Him. I have heard from many sources about Krsna; I want to be very near to Him.”

Then, to be nearer to His devotees- that is still more tangible, and more real. When we have got some practical faith in the association of His real servitors, then we acquire something substantial in our path of progress. By Him, that

association is made possible, and available, for helping us. So the position of one who has got abstract attraction for Krsna is considered to be primary; but one who has got aspiration for Krsna's servants, rather than for Krsna Himself, he is in a better position.

*isvare tad-adhinesu, balisesu dvisatsu ca  
prema-maitri-krpopeksa, yah karoti sa madhyamah*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 11:2:46)

“The devotee in the intermediate stage of devotional service is called a madhyama-adhikari. He loves the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is a sincere friend to all the devotees of the Lord, shows mercy to the innocent and disregards the envious.”

*arcayam eva haraye, pujam yah sraddhayehate  
na tad-bhaktesu canyesu, sa bhaktah prakrtah smrtah*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 11:2:47)

“A devotee who faithfully worships the Deity, but does not properly respect the Vaisnavas or the people in general is called a materialistic devotee, and is considered to be in the lowest position of devotional service.”

The beginners in devotion want Krsna, and not His devotees, but those who have some tendency to attain friendship and association with the devotees of Krsna have something tangible, something real. That is a higher position, because by such aspiration their real life, spiritual life, is insured. Na tad-bhaktesu canyesu, sa bhaktah prakrtah smrtah- those who are practising devotion, who want to cultivate Krsna consciousness through worship of the arca-murti, the Deity, or through reading books, or in any other way, but who are avoiding the bona-fide servitors of the Lord are in the ordinary, primary stage. But when some practical sympathy is felt in the heart for Krsna's devotees, that fortunate person has got something tangible in their life; and their position is more reliable, more safe, and more progressive.

And when nothing but the Krsna conception can satisfy the devotee- when whatever is coming to him, all the waves coming to him from every direction, whether good or bad, are connected with Krsna, are all concerning Krsna- then his position is better still. To the devotee in that stage, ‘good’ and ‘bad’ are both good because he sees everything as connected with the Centre.

For example: it may happen that a devotee may leave the Mission, the devotional association. By his good fortune, he came to connect with the Mission, but now he is going away; such a circumstance is bad, that is, it is unpalatable, an unfortunate thing. And another devotee who feels pain, whose heart is pained to see such a bad or unfortunate circumstance, he is in a bona-fide position. His heart is aching for that man who has fallen from Krsna consciousness, so, despite the unpleasant circumstances, his position is good. And conversely, when so many are coming to preach Krsna consciousness, carrying the flag of Mahaprabhu from corner to corner of this world, that same devotees' heart is feeling pleasure, and that is all good.

So in Krsna consciousness, both good and bad are good. Anything relating to Krsna consciousness- good or bad, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, but all concerning Krsna-that is good.

## **Exploitation, Renunciation, Dedication**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Modern science is only increasing the circumference of this world, the world of exploitation. According to Newton, for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. We must be conscious of the fact that all acquisition is ultimately nullity, because like a boomerang reaction will come back again to produce zero. This is actual scientific knowledge. But modern scientific progress is no progress, or progress in the wrong direction. It is like borrowing money. Taking a loan is not money at all. Whatever we take from nature will be extracted from us to the cent. So there is no gain. We are within the circumference of the exploiting world. Every object we take from nature is like a loan. But the loan must be cleared, rest assured.

The first principle of any living being is to live, to save himself. That should be the starting point of our whole endeavour for progress or knowledge. In the Upanisads we find *asato ma sad gamayo, tamaso ma jyotir gamayo, mrtyam mam amrtam gamayo*. This indicates what should be the primary tendency of our quest in three phases. First, I am transient and mortal, make me eternal.

Next, I am ignorant and in nescience, take me from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to light. Then, I am in sorrow and misery, guide me to anandam, joy and a fit life there. These should be the real goals of life, and any research must begin here only. Sac cid anandam, satyam sivam sundaram.

These should be the subject matter of our research, the line of our approach: to save oneself and save the world, to remove the darkness of ignorance and get the light of knowledge, and to remove misery and get the nectar of the sweet, sweet life. Scientific knowledge which avoids or ignores this is simply false, wild goose-chasing. And it is self-destructive or suicidal. Very soon atomic researchers are going to prove that their science devours itself. The civilization already created by it sucks its own blood. Modern man is feeding on the flesh of his own friends or of himself.

Material science and knowledge means only this. But this is not knowledge. Real knowledge must absorb yourself and others in eternal life, full knowledge and peaceful existence. This is our conception. This is what gurudeva has given to us. Our Guru Maharaja came to spread this sort of knowledge and we came hankering. Hungrily we felt ourselves looking for such things. Still I am engaged in that sort of quest, and that should be the real life for one and all who are in this mundane world. There should not be any other quest of any other engagement. There should be nothing of the kind. Then that will be real life.

And renunciation is not the remedy. That is the next point. The Buddhists and Sankarites say, “Yes, renunciation is the remedy, leave everything.” But the Vaisnavas come with a third proposal. They know it is temporary living in the land of exploitation, but one cannot exist without engagement, Only renunciation means withdrawal, to return to zero. That is not desirable. So the Vaisnavas say that there is a land of dedication, and that is normal, where every unit is a dedicating unit. And dedication must be towards the centre. Our inner atma, not mind or mundane intelligence, but transcending all these things our real conception is the soul which has some relationship with the subtler realm. The land of dedication begins with Vaikuntha and ends in Goloka.

Vaikuntha is the land of calculative dedication in terms of constitution and bound by law. But Goloka is the layer of spontaneity. It is desparate, careless of its own self – so intense. That is the highest, and by the work of dedication of all it becomes a very heavenly area. All dedicating, none extorting, so happiness of the highest degree is to be found there. Everyone is enjoying there. If all are idle

men and they meet together that will be like hell. But if all the working men co-operate together there will be immense opulence. Because everyone is dedicating to the highest degree, opulence or bliss is flowing everywhere. There is no want. All Krsna consciousness, pure beauty and love reigns there. The king is that of beauty and love, where there is no force of labour, but all is a labour of love. Beauty and love are controlling, not power. That is Goloka. This is Gaudiya Vaisnavism. And Mahaprabhu and His followers carry the banner of such creed.

And where do we start? Through nama, divine sound, it is easy to begin the spiritual quest. The most subtle thing in our experience here is sound. And it is cheap, much easier than dravya, yajna and so many other things which are to be gathered. Sound comes freely and without any expense. So our research can begin with sound, but that sound must be of divine characteristic.

Just as the medicine in a homeopathic globule cannot be shown by the outer figure, so also only when sound, the name Krsna comes from the proper person, then Krsna will be there within. In other words, Krsna from the mouth of a sadhu and Krsna from the mouth of an ordinary person is not one and the same. Just like the potency of the homoeopathic globule depends on the medicine within. The idea behind the sound, from where it comes, whether from Vaikuntha, Goloka, or some particular rasa, to that place the sound will gradually assert itself and take you there. The sound, Vaikuntha nama grahanam, must come from the infinite world, Vaikuntha, not from any mundane origin. So the inner potency is to be discerned and detected. To a certain extent I am able to give some idea.

What is the meaning of dedication or sacrifice? Yajnarthat karmano 'nyatra loko yam karma bandhana. Work should be done only as a sacrifice. All other work is mere energizing force. And yajno vai Krsna, aham hi sarva yajnanam bhokta ca prabhur eva ca. The Lord or Guardian says that it must be devoted towards Me, to My satisfaction, otherwise it is not yajna. Sacrifice means that it must be for the Absolute centre, and not for any provincial interest, sectarian purpose or anything else. It must go to the Absolute and then it will be real yajna. Other yajna, devata upasana (deva worship) will go up and then come down.

So devata upasana is saguna, and My upasana is nirguna. Saguna means under the influence of maya, the good and bad of this world. And nirguna means that of Absolute characteristic, which has value everywhere. Just as the standard of

money is not currency like the dollar, yen or ruble, but gold, so rasa is the standard of realization of the Absolute. Provincial ideas, sectarianism or anything like that won't do. Such provincialism will be devata upasana, not worship of Myself. The attempts of the little-brained persons will certainly be futile – going up and coming down. Abrahma bhuvanal lokah punar arvartino 'rjuna. "I am the only enjoyer of everything, and I am friendly to all.

When you can realize that I am all in all and that I am a friend to you at the time, then all misgivings will disappear in you." My guardian is the Absolute all-fearless power. My interest is represented in Him. I may not know of my own real interest, but He knows it better. So I don't have to be afraid that the management is with Him. Absolute good is an autocrat and that is the best arrangement. The absolute good must be concentrated there in the autocrat. He must have complete freedom, then everyone will be benefited because He is all good. So there should be no misgivings, no apprehension, then one's heart will be filled with peace only.

Sreyan dravya mayad yajna. By sacrifice and yoga also, dedication is promoted. By dedication we live and grow, and by exploitation we die and go down. By renunciation we become zero and stand still like in deep slumber. So both exploitation and renunciation must be given up and dedication to the centre and to all in connection with the centre, must be taken up. I shall not exploit anything, at the same time I must not dismiss anything. Everything is friendly to me.

One should see with this vision. In Gita, Krsna says yo mam pasyati sarvatra sarvam ca mayi pasyati, "I am everywhere. Only see in that connection, with that angle of vision. Try to find Me, and everything in Me. Then you will be out of danger. Otherwise, that which is non-god will take you otherwise. If you can see the connection of God everywhere then you are safe. No one will be your enemy. You will have no foes, you are in the midst of friends. He is everywhere and everything. He is not lost in My sight, and I am not lost in his sight". In Bhagavatam it is also mentioned, sarva bhutesu yah pasyet bhagavad bhavan. One who can always see My connection with everything, and accordingly see what will be his connection with Me, is properly adjusted. He can adjust with everything. He can see things perfectly, otherwise he cannot avoid punishment. Yamaraj, the punishing judge won't allow us to escape.

One who performs yajna towards Krsna with this sort of knowledge, is the real

type of yajna. But other types of yajna mentioned in the Vedas, for propitiating different gods or demigods is not yajna proper. One who performs such yajnas does not know the purpose of the scriptures. Only when it is done for Krsna, then the yajna is performed in truth.

One's conception of Krsna must also be proper. The mayavadis and others also recognize Krsna, but they see Him as a part of maya. This is not correct. We must have the view of nirguna Krsna. Such vision will depend on our faith which is acquired by previous sukrti. Faith is necessary. Intellectual approach based on false ego will not help.

The false ego means the ego who is receiving and transmitting false information, false knowledge. The ego is like a yantra or machine. Like a computer the false ego is receiving false news and transmitting false news. It is engaged with what is not wholesome and what is opposite to our real interest. Our innate tendency is to live. This is our inner nature or inner necessity. But if that is not being transmitted, it is working against my interest, and that is false. The ego is like the computer, but because it is dealing with falsehood it is called false ego. False information means that one is not acquainted with reality. There may be false duality or real duality. Everything may be real, but if our conception is false then everything will be false.

Tarko pratistha. Argument alone cannot bring us to the conclusion. Sraddha is necessary, for discussion alone cannot give birth to any fruitful thing. The conclusion is so high that only sraddha can reach it, and nothing else. The electromagnetic ether can reach the sun, moon and stars, but not the air or other media. So to approach the infinite world, the knowledge or experience of this world will not help, but only sraddha comes to our aid. The intellect or knowledge is like the vayumandal, the air around the globe. What is learned through the experience of the earth cannot pierce through the domain beyond. Only the ether connects everything. So sraddha, faith, can connect us with the farthest quarter and take us there. Faith is the basis and by dedication to Krsna we can reach the highest platform of perfection.

Gaura Hari bol! Gaura Hari bol!

## **Faith and Harmony**

Here in the mundane plane, eliminating God, everyone is self centered therefore there is clash and reaction. But in the higher realm, with harmony, there is no clash.

In that plane any apparent clash exists to promote inner wealth. In this mundane plane there is apparent friendship but inner animosity, but in the God-centered plane there is apparent competition but inner friendship because the flow of God-service is common to everyone. Krishna consciousness is the most accommodating. We are to consider that it is beyond justice. It is the land of mercy consideration.

Our highest goal is from the consideration of mercy, not justice. It is inconceivable, but above justice is the plane of consideration, mercy and affection, and that is Krishna consciousness. It even goes over what is our due, therefore it is high. The consideration there is crossing our capacity so there is no room for any complaint.

Everything is coming through affection and it is not based upon any justice according to our capacity, so we have no right to make any judgment. If any position will be given to us there, it will be by extended affection. On the whole, to enter into the plane of divinity means grace. We have no rights, and He may not even allow us to enter there. Only we must have as our visa the good-will to serve that land, and not to engage in treachery, otherwise we will not be allowed entrance. Faithful contribution to that land is *śraddhā*; with that we may be taken in—not only taken in but we shall find all home-comfort there and full freedom. The fullest freedom is in Krishna consciousness, and that is above justice. The law of the country is ignored, and more benefit is allowed. We will get more freedom, comfort, and everything there in *Vrindavan*. Why? Because it is a transaction of natural faith and love, affection, etc.

It is inconceivable, *acintya khalu ye bhava na tams tarkena yojayet*. The Upanisads say, "Don't venture to test that plane with your reason. It is beyond the capacity of your thinking, it has different laws, so don't try to approach there with your calculations." So, when we apparently see a clash between persons who are trying for realization, we must understand it properly. We may feel

discouraged: "They are approaching towards harmony, so why should they come in clash?" But we find it happens, and it may be of different types according to the plane in which the clash takes place. In Vaikuntha we find that the four Kumaras were going to visit Narayana, but Jaya and Vijaya appealed to them not to go at this time. The four Kumaras were infuriated and threw a curse upon Jaya and Vijaya. We sometimes find this apparently undesirable clash between the devotees, though ultimately it is all for some higher purpose for the Lord's satisfaction.

Clashes can even be seen in Krishna-lila. Of course, in Vrindavan competition is of the highest type and we are to understand that it is necessary. It is planned by Yogamaya to enhance the satisfaction of Krishna. Different plans are designed by Yogamaya, and the apparent clash is designed purposely in order to produce a peculiar satisfaction in Krishna. Such things are found even within the various groups including that of Srimati Radharani. In Krishna's Vrindavan pastimes we even find so many asuras set against His lila; but those demons have a contribution - in a negative way - in that a hero must have some incidents to show his heroism. To kill asuras is a part of heroism.

We even find clashes within the same group-groups within a group but what is found we shall try to take as part of lila. The criterion of lila is that it happens for the satisfaction of the Center. We also find clashes, even severely, within the lila of the most magnanimous incarnation of the Lord, Sriman Mahaprabhu. Adwaita Prabhu and Srivasa Pandit presented themselves as members of the aristocratic class, but Nityananda Prabhu and Haridas Thakur represented just the opposite: the common mass. It is recorded in Sri Chaitanya Bhagavat that one day soon after the miscreants Jagai and Madhai had been converted and included in the samkirttan, Adwaita Acharya revolted: "You are taking in the ordinary people of the lower section. This makes it difficult for persons of dignified position like myself and Srivasa Pandit to remain here in this clan of samkirttan." When Mahaprabhu heard this it pierced him in the core of His heart. He could not tolerate such a statement. He immediately left the party, ran straight to the Ganges and hurled Himself in the waters. Nityananda Prabhu and Haridas Thakur quickly followed the Lord and they also jumped in. Nityananda took the Lord by His shoulders and Haridas by His feet and they pulled Him out from the waters of the Ganges.

Mahaprabhu said, "All right; but I shall go and stay with Nandan Acharya." Nandan Acharya was a devotee whose home was on the banks of the Ganges a

short way from the town of Nabadwip. Mahaprabhu hid Himself there and instructed, "Don't disclose to Adwaita Acharya that I am here." Then Adwaita Acharya Prabhu thought to himself, "What have I done? I could not control myself. My aristocratic sentiment came out so suddenly and it hurt and struck the sentiment of Mahaprabhu so much so that He fled and jumped into the Ganges." Adwaita Acharya then fasted. He mourned, "What have I done?"

After two days, news of Adwaita Acharya's resolve to fast till death reached Mahaprabhu. Then Mahaprabhu's heart melted again and He approached Adwaita Acharya. "Acharya, get up, I am leaving my hide-out and I am coming to you." Quoting a verse He explained that by the order of a minister representing the King so many persons are hanged, but that same representative of the King who has hanged so many by the King's order, he also may be hanged by the order of the King. "The Absolute is such, please don't mind. Now get up and take Prasadam." In this way Adwaita Acharya was pacified.

Furthermore we hear that sometimes Mahaprabhu showed him honor due to his age. Adwaita Acharya was very senior in age, he may even have been more senior than Mahaprabhu's father, however he always considered that Mahaprabhu was not a man, therefore he constantly tried to show respect to Him. But Mahaprabhu did not allow, "What! You are senior. You are in the rank of My guardians, the rank of My parents. You should not show honor to Me, rather I am to show you honor." He began forcibly taking the feet dust of Adwaita Acharya who became distressed. Then Adwaita Prabhu thought, "I have to make a plan so I can receive His punishment." So he went to his Santipur house and began to preach jnana-marga showing that mukti is the highest end and bhakti is lower. "The principle of bhakti admits that God is fully independent, 'We may try to please Him, but He may or may not be pleased, it is His will.' So what is the necessity of wild goose chasing? God may or may not be propitiated and we may or may not get His Grace, it is all uncertain. But mukti is in our hand: by certain practices we can enter into samadhi, therefore mukti is our real end and friend. We should take to that." In this way Adwaita Acharya began to preach in the Santipur camp.

The news reached Mahaprabhu: "Adwaita Acharya used to preach for Your camp but now he preaches against Your principle." Then one day Nityananda Prabhu and Mahaprabhu went to Santipur, and what a scene! Mahaprabhu began to give a good beating to the old Acharya. "Why have you invited Me and brought Me down here? By your invitation and attraction I have come down but

now you are going against Me. What is your reason?" Mahaprabhu began to slap him. Haridas Thakur shuddered, "What is this? I am seeing inconceivable things." Nityananda Prabhu stood there and found Himself to be relishing something, and wondering what more things would come out. And Sita Thakurani, Adwaita's wife, protested, "No, no. Don't beat that old man so hard. He will be finished! Stop your beating." But Adwaita Acharya came through smiling: "Now I have taken revenge on You. You always come to take my feet dust. But now see! You have come to punish me, so who is superior, myself or You?" In this way the Acharya came out smiling and everything was pacified, rather Mahaprabhu was a little indisposed. Sometimes we see such things also within the devotee section. Such things are there!

In Dvaraka also we find clashes. We find in Dvaraka that there was much dispute about a gem. The father of Satyabhama, Satrajit, gained that gem by worshipping the sun-god. It was known as the Syamantaka Jewel, but it was presently taken away by one after another. Prasena, the younger brother of Satrajit, took that Syamantaka Jewel. He wore it around his neck and went into the forest in order to hunt. While in the forest a lion became charmed with the grace of the gem, he killed Prasena and took it. Then the bear Jambavan, Ramachandra's servant, fought with the lion, killed him and took away the gem.

Anyhow a rumor began that Krishna had somehow captured the gem, and that it was all His diplomacy. Because of this, Krishna thought, "The burden is now on Me, so I shall have to search for that gem, take it and give it to its proper place. A bad name has come upon Me, so to clear My name I am to search for the gem." He therefore searched along the way that Prasena went. He then followed the footprints of the lion and found a place where a bear and the lion had been fighting. The lion lay dead. Following the footprints of the bear Krishna reached a hole in the earth. He entered there and that is a story in itself. Anyhow, when Ramachandra's servant, Jambavan, finally understood the situation after fighting for 15 days or so, he came out and offered the gem and his daughter, Jambavati, to Krishna.

Then again the gem was lost. The suspect was Satadhanva. It was suspected that by some means Satadhanva had captured it, although it was not the case. On hearing the rumor Satadhanva became afraid, "They think I have the gem, so I will be killed." Though he had not taken the gem, the rumor was so much against him that he became frightened and ran away from that place. Because he was running away, Krishna and Balarama followed him. Krishna ran fastest, captured

Satadhanva and killed him. Searching him He found no gem and so became puzzled. By this time Balarama had caught up with Him and Krishna told him, "I have killed Satadhanva in vain. No gem is found here." Balarama then exclaimed, "Oh, You are deceiving me. You have become so unfaithful. All right, You go back. I am going to Jarasandha, the enemy camp." There he began to train Duryodhan. Such lilas do take place and are to be traced in Srimad-Bhagavatam.

When explaining all these things, our Srila Guru Maharaja used to say, "These hindrances come on the path in order to make it more valuable and in order to deceive those of less faith and the unfaithful. Those who are fortunate souls will be able to cross over all these incidents and will be hopelessly attracted by the sweetness of the lila of Krishna. They will be given entrance there." Purposefully these hindrances are posted along the way so that ordinary people may not enter. Krishna lila will come to those who have deep faith and who have some real taste for the thing. In spite of all these hindrances it will come to those for whom this is unavoidably charming, and who, by descending grace, are helplessly drawn beyond such apparent hindrances. The technical name for this lila is asuramohan. This has been planned in order to deceive the asura types: those of undivine character.

So we are to be careful about all these things. There can be quarrels amongst the parties up to the very highest. With such a beautiful flower, so soft and good-looking as a rose, why should there be any thorns? Its roots draw nourishment from the earth, and that sap produces such a soft flower, such a beautiful thing. Why should that sap also produce so many thorns on the stem? So, there is thesis, antithesis and synthesis. There is assertion of a subject, then comes opposition, then higher harmony comes in synthesis where there is found higher grouping, higher unity and harmony. Then again that becomes the thesis and so antithesis comes and again both become harmonized. This is the nature of lila and such nature is there to help.

Sometimes we may find that in order for a drama not to become monotonous some light-heartedness may be introduced to make the audience laugh. Just as a clown may be introduced in the midst of a drama to prevent any monotony, the asura-mohan-lila may be necessary to give variety to Krishna's pastimes. We have to properly adjust many things when considering Krishna's lila.

I was astonished to find in Srimad-Bhagavatam that when Krishna was about to

enter Dvaraka after a long absence, a procession party from the town came to receive Him. It is described in Srimad-Bhagavatam that included in the procession were prostitutes dancing. I thought, "What is this? In Dvaraka there are prostitutes?" Rather, I was shocked to find this. "How can Dvaraka accommodate prostitutes?" In heaven there are also prostitutes, but we are to analyze what is at the basis of all this. Both good and bad exist, but badness is only found in the mundane realm. What is here must have its origin in the higher realm- and this is only a perverted reflection of that. Everything that is found here is also there first. From there its reflection has come here as the perverted manifestation. The main difference is that everything in that spiritual realm is full of serving attitude, but here it is all with enjoying attitude.

We cannot drag everything within our reason and arguments, but still we are to try to understand things according to our capacity, faith and realization. Despite all this, sweet-ness is sweet and truth is truth. Truth, however strong it is, is truth. We are to accommodate this in our mind. We should not think that only this mundane purity is the basis to prove transcendental divinity: we are not to take the standard from here and apply it there. We are to understand service to be so pure.

Draupadi had five husbands, but if we take her name then we will be purified:

*ahalya-draupadi-kunti-tara-inandodari yatha  
pancakanya smaret nityam mahapataka nasanam*

All these five ladies had more than one husband, but they were gained by circumstance. The scholars may make you feel cautious, but don't think in that way: if you take their name you will be purified - such is their position. It is not for lust. It is not for mean lust that they gained so many husbands, but at the bottom of it all is sacrifice. You are to remember that. You are to study the depth before giving evaluation. You are to understand and follow the basis, the very foundation. Sacrifice can make anything pure. You are to understand the very fundamental things of existence. The degree of purity or impurity does not depend on form, but substance. We are to draw our attention towards that. We are to try to understand the substance, and not so much the form.

## **Faith In The Absolute**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Faith in Krsna, the Absolute Truth, is innate in every soul. Faith is coexistent with the soul, but at present it is covered by maya. Maya means miscalculation, misunderstanding, and wrong interest. Because our faith is covered, we cannot trace it out, but it is there within us. Only when we have come in connection with a real saint will our inner faith awaken.

Faith is within us but at present it is suppressed, and so we give more importance to some local and temporary interest, ignoring our eternal interest.

This is the condition of the soul in bondage. Our eternal interest within has been covered by the local, temporary interest. So, because we have forgotten our eternal self-interest we have to suffer.

Any self-interest is limited. Local means limited. The Rupee, which is valuable in India, won't have any use outside of India. The Rupee is a local currency. On the other hand, gold has value everywhere; gold is the central basis of all local currencies. In the same way service to the Supreme Lord is the Absolute interest, without which all local interests are valueless. So, we are all servants of the Supreme Absolute Centre and His service is our eternal interest.

As a servant of the Absolute, I may assert His interest wherever I may be posted. By serving the Absolute interest, all local interests are automatically served. But a servant of India has different interests than a servant of Russia, a servant of America or a servant of Japan. These are all local interests. So, these local interests must be given up. We must learn what is the Universal interest and awaken to our inner plane of life, which is fully in harmony with that Universal interest. We must follow that path, for that is higher, more tasteful and more reasonable in all respects. That is a perfect life. Serving the Universal interest is the real meaning of religion and the ultimate religion is Bhagavat Dharma. If we serve any partial interest then another part will revolt. We must serve the Universal interest which is already within us; that will be useful and successful everywhere.

Anyone may say that they have sraddha or faith, but faith has its criterion. If someone asserts that his faith in some local interest is as good as his faith in the

Universal interest, it will not pass the examination of the experts. They will examine him. They know the symptoms of real faith, its criterion, its jurisdiction and its characteristics. Apparently there are so many different kinds of faith: Christianity, Islam, Yoga, and so many other religious creeds. If a person has some religious creed, he may assert “This is my faith”. It may be a particular creed, but Absolute faith has its separate existence. Only real Krsna consciousness represents those who have Absolute faith.

Some people say, “Krsna is a particular form with a human figure. How can that be a universal representation of the Absolute truth? Krsna consciousness is also a local, narrow type of belief. You say that Krsna is the Absolute but He has a particular figure. We don’t say that the Absolute is limited to a particular figure. He is beyond the range of our eye and ear experience, our mental and intellectual experience. He is all-comprehensive and all-permeating.”

This is Brahman conception of the Absolute. Brahman means all-comprehensive. Everything is contained within that. Brahman means the broadest knowledge, which can complement all possible parts of knowledge. Above that is the Paramatma conception. Paramatma means the all-pervading, smallest of the small. Beyond the atom is the proton and the electron, and the smallest of the small: Paramatma. Paramatma means the smallest of the small, and Brahman is the biggest of the big.

Bhagavan is of a different type. Bhagavan, or the Supreme Lord Krsna, is He who attracts the attention of everyone. He is neither the biggest nor the smallest, but He who can attract all attention. That aspect of the Lord in its most extreme form is Krsna, and He is so sweet that He can attract everything. There may be so many atoms both big and small, but gravity attracts them, gives them some form and they become the cosmos. In the highest sense, attraction means not only physical attraction but wholesale attraction in body, mind and soul.

The centre of the highest attraction is Krsna. Krsna means ‘One who can attract everything and give the highest satisfaction in return’. Although He may come within our visualized experience, that experience has no connection with this world. He is transcendental. Krsna can play in the rasa dance, and appear simultaneously at the side of every gopi, by expanding Himself into innumerable doubles, so that, by the side of each gopi there is one Krsna. Brahma stole Krsna’s calves and cowboys, but by His will everything was kept up. There was no loss to Krsna, so infinite is He in character. But because we are finite, He

approaches us in an easily comprehensible way, in a way that we can visualize Him. Otherwise, our eyes are useless in trying to perceive the infinite.

If something is very dazzling we cannot see it. Our eyes have their limits. If a light is very intense we cannot see it, or if a light is very dim we cannot perceive it. We can only perceive the middle part of the spectrum. Similarly, if a sound is very loud our ear cannot grasp it, and if a sound is very soft also, our ear cannot catch it. Our ear can function only within the limitation of a certain sound range. Everything which is above or below our sense perception is of no use to us, and so Krsna appears to us in the middle, in so many ways. He appears to us in a certain colour, a certain figure. He appears in sound as the name Krsna; He appears for the eye experience as the Deity; for the ear experience as the name Krsna; for the tongue experience He appears as prasadam. In different ways our senses can have a corresponding relationship with Him.

Once, I went to preach in Karachi, in 1935 or so. The president of the AryaSamaj came to see us and his first remark was, "If the finite can know the infinite, then he is not infinite. You are worshippers of dolls, idols; you say that you can know God, but you are a finite soul. The infinite can never be known by you". That was his argument. "You vaisnavas preach doll worship, idol worship. Your transaction is only within the limited world. You don't know anything about the unlimited". With this basis, he attacked us. But I immediately replied, "If the infinite cannot make Himself known to the finite, then He is not infinite". So, in the vaisnava creed, or in any other creed, we should always keep in mind that everything depends on Him. He can come down to our level, but we cannot go up to His level.

We can only attract Him to come down to our level by improving our negative tendency. We should pray, "O Lord, I am so mean. I am the most fallen of the fallen, the lowest of the low. Without Your help, I am nothing. Please be satisfied, be propitiated with me." That is possible only through saranagati, self-surrender. Through saranagati, we can attract the superior plane to descend to the lower plane. He has the power. He can take me to His domain. He is all-powerful, but we cannot force our entrance into that domain. We have no natural right to do that. We are made of lower stuff. He is adhoksaja, transcendental. Adhoksaja means that plane of existence which can keep the world of experience in a lower position. The world of experience is pushed down by the adhoksaja plane. That subtle plane of existence can come down to us, but we cannot go up. Only if He takes us there, can we go up. With a passport, we can go to the verge

of our jurisdiction, to the border, but if we have a visa, if a visa is allowed, then we can enter into the domain of another land. So, the human mind and intellect can have no touch of the adhoksaja realm.

A few days ago, there was a rumour of flying saucers. It was thought that from a more civilized land, they came in a small plane and wandered over this world. From earth, the airforce gave chase to the flying saucers, but they disappeared. Where they have gone, no one can trace. They returned disappointed. The flying saucers can descend there, to connect with this planet; the airforce can follow them to some extent, but the flying saucers disappear beyond their vision. The adhoksaja or transcendental plane is something like that. There is a subtle plane that can come down to our gross mind and intelligence, but we cannot go up there.

The mayavadis and the Buddhists say that we can withdraw from this world of experience and dissolve into the world of soul. They say that the non-differentiated spiritual plane is the ultimate end. But Ramanuja and the other Vaisnavaacharya say that there is another plane of existence, which is more subtle, more efficient and more powerful. The soul, which we may think of as the sun or moon, is a gross thing in comparison to that realm. Just as the flying saucer can come here, the transcendental plane can descend to the plane of the soul, and then the soul can have experience. But if it withdraws from our experience, then the soul cannot do anything, but the recollection will be there. He will remember that something wonderful, some wonderful experience came to touch his heart. Again, how can he have such an experience? When Mahaprabhu was coming from Gaya, he suddenly saw Krsna with His flute, and then Krsna disappeared. But Mahaprabhu's heart was fully captured by the sweetness and the extraordinary impression of His appearance. He said, "I can't stand it; I can't live. Oh, My friends, if you want Me to live, then show Me that land of beauty. The beauty that I suddenly experienced when I was coming back from Gaya; how sweet it was! It captured all the nerves of My soul. I can't stand to live. Oh, My friends, if you want Me to live, then show Me that land of beauty".

So, he managed anyhow to again show that sweet figure. It is so sweet. That is the impression, that is the consciousness, that is the thought, that is the idea. That area is superior even to the soul, it is most fine. That is a plane of concrete reality, but we are only chewing the cover; we are not getting a touch of the spirit within. What we experience by our eyes, by our ears, by our tongue, is only the

cover and not the spirit within (na te viduh svartha-gatim hi visnum). Prahlada Maharaj says that we are making much of the outer cover of the world, of the universe, but the sweet substance that is within, we cannot have a trace of that. But the grace is coming down by the will of that Almighty; that supreme knowledge and beauty is the uppermost.

Beauty and harmony are the highest. Even knowledge searches after beauty. One who wants knowledge wants to be the gainer by calculation. He wants to gain something, but what is that something? What is it that knowledge is searching after? He is searching after sweetness and beauty, for harmony and ecstasy. And that is present there in the highest sphere, the highest layer that can come down. Now, we are in a neglected position, we are so weak; how will it be possible to attain that plane? How will it be possible to get permanent nationality there? How is it possible? We must begin in a particular process.

The agents are coming. Contact with them and watch the light. Find out what is necessary to live in that country; prepare yourself. Above all, you must accept the interest of that plane as your interest. There, in that plane everyone wants to serve Krsna, to please Krsna. He is the centre. We must try to be trained, so that if you are taken there, you will know what to do. So, the agent is necessary. He will teach us. From Him, we will get the knowledge, and in this way we will train ourselves and then the correction will come and we will be able to go there. By their grace, we will go there and we will be utilized there in the service of the Lord. So, self-abnegation is necessary.

First, we are all self-aggrandizing units. So, self-abnegation is necessary. Then self-aggrandizement should be banished, self-seeking must go, local interest seeking must be given up and the universal interest, especially in the plane of Krsna's satisfaction must be taken up. How will we get such a training? Through the saints, the scriptures and the guru. By following some regulations, we shall gradually be able to secure some service in that plane, and we shall be taken there. It is a reality; it is not a concoction. It is not imagination.

Why should we run after a phantasmagoria? It seems that apparently we are searching after something imaginary, leaving behind the concrete world, but this world is not the concrete reality. That is the defect. We see in our everyday experience that everything is vanishing here. We do not want this; we want to live eternally. It is our nature to live eternally. But, although it is undesirable, still, we have to die. It is inevitable. So, in the vision of a sober judgement this

world is not concrete. It is all disappointing. It is all cheating; maya. Ma-ya; that which is not.

Maya means to be engaged with a particular thing that is not. That thing which is not what we conceive it to be. So, this world is not concrete; first we have to understand that. We have to understand that this is not substantial. Everyone is here for some time and then they are passing away. So, if we want to conquer death, then we have to seek that inner world where this body may not go; this mind will not be utilized there. Within, there is the soul, and within the soul lies the unique function to serve the sweetness, Krsna. That should be evolved, awakened and with the proper agent of the Absolute, the spiritual master, that aspect of our inner eternal self will be taken to the plane of infinite resources and our hearts' fulfilment will be reached.

## **Faith in the devotees**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** If we want to penetrate the deeper understandings of faith – not mere belief – we must go to the devotees. They are like so many pillars of faith. We are told electricity is everywhere, and there are so many dynamos that can show electric power. Similarly, there are so many devotees past and present with whom we can find real Godliness.

They are standing like pillars of faith. If we accept Jesus Christ, then his ideal way of sacrifice will encourage and increase faith in us. So many devotees are there to help us. What sort of devotee is Prahlada? When we come in history to such a life like the great devotee Prahlada, then our heart is fulfilled, “Oh, how great – God is present there.”

In this way, when our attention is toward the devotees, we automatically rise to a particular high standard of faith. When the devotees help us, we are in a safe plane with our attention towards them. So many pillars of faith are standing there and proving that the Lord is existing. The devotees are neglecting the objects of enjoyment and standing with their heads erect to show, to say and to declare that.

“There is a Supreme Entity. We have seen Him repeatedly and we have experienced all this.”

Faith in the advanced devotees is a very substantial help to us all, as their position is not flickering. They have a firm position because of their faith in the higher devotees. So, when one has got faith in the elevated devotees, then his faith – his devotion – is of tangible character.

Otherwise, the beginners, they have not much faith in the devotees, but some abstract faith in the Lord. That is not reliable. Devotion comes to a reliable standard when one can find devotion in the devotees and give more importance to them.

Above scripture, the devotees are there and our faith in the devotees is the real way. Faith in the devotees is something tangible to us. In the higher stages, one can trace the Supreme Entity everywhere, in every movement. It is His Sweet Will. When the middle things – the barriers within that give opposition – are gone, then direct connection with the Supreme Entity fully awakens.

Sometimes the Lord likes to play hide-and-seek with the devotees. Sometimes He comes clear and sometimes He is vague. Whenever He is vague, the devotees begin to cry, “Where are You, my Lord? I don’t feel You, I cannot see You. How can I continue my life? How can I live without You? You are so charming, so joyous, so fulfilling that I cannot live without Your connection?”

In this way, the devotees begin to wail and cry when He appears vague to them. Everything is depending on the Lord’s Sweet Will. If we want to trace the cause, then we shall find this is the cause of something, and that is the cause of the cause. Then we shall think, “Oh, this is the final substance, the Reality we are searching after. The whole world is searching after this beauty and charm of the Lord.”

There is a song, “O Mountain! O Himalaya! O Alps! O Sumeru! What are you searching for with your heads erect? Have you seen the creator of this world? Have you attained the fulfilment of your life? Have you seen Him?” In this way, a devotee feels – in his heart of hearts – that everything is searching for Krsna, God, who is the complete fulfilment of life.

In this world of life and death, there is nothing tangible to attract our attention. In this phenomenal world, our inner heart searches after something eternal.

There is sat – Eternal Consciousness; cit – satisfying our search for knowledge of Him; and anandam – satisfying our hankering for beauty and love. Love is the fulfilment of life. We shall be able to understand that when love awakens in the heart and the function of the brain is gone away. This is a peculiar and particular phase of life. Wherever we may be, we are automatically searching, searching, and searching for that big “Yes” – “Om”.

“Om” means a big “Yes”. Whatever you are searching for, it exists. What your inner heart hankers after, that exists and is existing. Whatever apparently you see, you must go to the inner substance – the Super-subject. The Lord of your search is there. From Omkara comes Gayatri, next comes the Vedas, and then the Vedanta. Lastly, the Srimad Bhagavatam descends to give a description of the ecstatic side, the joyful side of the Lord.

The Infinite Lord comes so close to the finite that the finite thinks, “He is one of us.” He plays the part of such nearness – a near friend to us – so much so that we think, “He is one of us.” This is the Lord’s highest grace and kindness towards us. Our highest attainment is also there in His Divine Abode, Vrndavan.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu told us, “Eliminate all other conceptions and make haste to that Vrndavana Lord – Sri Krsna. He is Svayam Bhagavan – God of Gods, Lord of Lords. He is the source of so many majestic displays of His supernatural powers.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu explained it succinctly, “Search for Sri Krsna! There is no other alternative, no other duty in this world except what I say, ‘Search for Sri Krsna’ Take His Holy Name, and talk about Him. Whatever you do, connect with Krsna Consciousness and go on with faith and firm determination. You will get your fulfilment of life very shortly.”

So, go on taking His Holy Name, while searching or talking, whether you are sleeping, eating, walking or quarrelling. Whatever you are doing, connect with Krsna and go on making progress. Sincere search is necessary for the aspiring devotee so that his Krsna conception may not be only a sham – a hypocritical endeavour. And you will get help in that direction from the real devotees.

Anyhow, go on searching for Krsna with the help of the devotees, the scriptures and all sincerity within you. Whomever you meet with, talk about Krsna, and do not invite the prey of death – family, money and everything else may evaporate the next moment. Sincerely searching for Krsna is the eternal joy in every step of

your life. Krsna is not your concoction.

The source is the saints and scriptures, and not this mundane world of enjoyment. Neither through abhorrence or renunciation will you find Krsna. Krsna is the positive inquiry in the heart of the devotees. Those who are carried by the charm of this external world cannot understand what is their inner requirement. They are unfortunate.

So, the main conclusion is to keep company with the devotees who have got real faith in Krsna. It is very, very rare in this world to find such devotees. If we want the help of that association, then you are to keep this ideal on the crown of your head.

*‘sadhu-sanga’, ‘sadhu-sanga’, sarva sastre kaya  
lava-matra sadhu sange sarva siddhi haya  
(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya 22.54)*

“If properly utilized, a moment’s association with the fully surrendered devotees is sufficient for your highest attainment. If one moment can be properly used, sufficiently used, then there is no necessity of long, long life. Only a point in time is sufficient to solve the whole problem of life if it is properly used in association with the devotees, the agents of Krsna. We shall try to associate with them at all costs. What is the necessity of ages and ages of living a long, long life if we are unconscious of our own self-interest? One moment with the agents of Krsna, if properly utilized, is sufficient to solve the whole problem of our life for which we are eternally wandering about for millenniums. We must be wakeful to our interest. We must not be negligent, but wakeful – to our own self-interest.”

Sri Chaitanya Maharapbhu came to tell us what is our real interest within. “You do not want to know your own heart. You do not know. You are a foreigner to your own heart and its demand. Faith in the devotees is the wealth within your heart – try to find that ‘Hidden Treasure’.”

This was the direction of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

It is all within you. You are to eliminate all foreign things, then within your heart you will find a Temple of Krsna. Your heart within is a Temple of Krsna. Search your own heart with the help of a proper guide and you will find Krsna there. A proper guide is not a foreign substance to you. Every heart is a temple of the

Lord. It is your inner wealth. It is your Home – ‘Back to God, back to Home’.”

Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol.

## **Faith Is Our Real Wealth**

Why does our consciousness come down and cannot have a higher conception of higher spiritual existence, but our attention is drawn to some material thing? We think some medicine, or some intoxication can help us. When I cannot raise my consciousness to the fine and higher conscious substance, then we come to seek help in the material world. “These substances will help me.” It is suicidal.

We cannot manage to have a connection directly with the higher conscious substance then we come to seek some means in the lower.

“With the help of that I will make advancement towards the finer consciousness. The matter will help me to understand, to acquire consciousness.” We are thus faithless in the agents of that Absolute Truth, the Vaisnavas. It is due to vaishnava-aparadha, losing faith in the conscious agents of the Supreme, that we go to the material substance, “Help me!” I lose faith in the spiritual agency and the long and the short is this – we seek shelter in a material thing and we lose our faith in the higher agency. We can’t see their Grace.

So, that is the underlying position of an intoxication monger. No faith in the higher agent, that which is spiritual which is soul in character, but more aspiration to get help from the lower substance.

The scientific conception is also like that, degrading. Degrading, losing faith in the spiritual efficacy, their grace or their position, we come below standard. No faith. We cannot put faith in the devotee, the scripture, or the acharya.

Disappointed we go to seek help from some atom of matter, “That will give me everything.”

*abhyarthitas tada tasmai stanani kalaye dadau*

*dhyutam panam striyah suna yatraddharmas catur vidhah  
punas ca yacamanaya jata-rupam adat prabhuh  
tato 'nrtam madam kamam rajo vairam ca pancamam*

Charm for the material world, dhyutam to get money very cheaply, not in the ordinary constitutional way, but by a cheating process, this is dhyutam. Panam is also like that intoxication. That is earned by black marketing, panam. The energy I can collect in an ordinary sense, I am not satisfied with that but in some black way I want to amass some energy by panam. This is the meaning of Panam. I want to get energy by unfair means. Striyah, that is raso vai sah. He is the center of all ecstasy, but we go to collect that experience of ecstasy in a very cheap way from material things. Suna is also a cheap way to develop the body. The flesh, mamsa, can be more easily utilized for the flesh in me than other vegetables.

So it is all very easy, not in a regular and proper way to preserve oneself, but in a cheap way, by cheating, we want to aggrandize ourselves.

Gold is such a substance that if one can get control over gold, he can have control over all material prosperity, the dollar, the pound, the rupee, rice, everything. If I can possess gold, I can easily get everything. This is cheating. With a small thing like gold, jata-rupam I can control the entire food chain. I can control all the necessities of the human beings. Cheap marketing, not a regular life, but in a cheating process. By these five cheating processes we can become great, so they must be given up. We must be plain, simple and truthful and live here as a bonafide and sincere member, where we are. You are put in the jail don't try any other black things to help yourself, but sincerely give your labour as it is ruled and you will be free very soon.

When you are a criminal be a good criminal then you will be able to acquire freedom. Already you are a criminal and in the prison you are cheating others. So, lead a simple life. Do not incur any further debt, but try to pay the debt you have already incurred. With this process you will be free very soon. Not by any artificial process, but if you adopt a sincere and simple process not by diplomacy or any other thing. Simply, "I am the greatest criminal. Oh my Lord, please forgive me. Take me out. Please be gracious over me." This is the way to adopt, not any artificial means.

It is only our love for artificial things that has brought us here. In the highest ideal there is no place for diplomacy, cheating or any of these things. This is the

fashion of this mayic world of misconception. To acquire anything too easily means to deceive others, but you cannot deceive God. Simply go to Him and pray that, “I am a culprit. I am so and so. Forgive me and accept me.” This is a plain, simple way. Your knowledge also cannot help you, it is jnana-sunya-bhakti, pure surrender, wholesale surrender. Don’t use any reason there. Don’t go to plead for your own cause. Complete surrender. Don’t plead in favour of yourself, rather if you have to plead, plead to the Lord that you are the most heinous. That will be more effective. This is the way.

Love Divine. It is against the conception of the ontology of love that a particular material atom may give love, prema, heart’s feelings. The heart can be purchased by a chemical, by using medicine I can get God?” Use this medicine and God will come to please and serve you. I am super-super God and I am giving this medicine.” Never! The simple way is ‘love for love.’ Give yourself and you will get Him. It is simple and pure. Surrender to the High and the High will come down to welcome you.

*sarva-dharman parityaja mam ekam saranam vraja  
aham tvam sarva papebhyo moksaisyami ma suca*

How comprehensive, reasonable and natural this is. “Give up everything, all engagements, and come to Me freely. I am ready to accept you anytime, at any moment. Accept that all obligation to any other thing is stopped and come to Me. I shall welcome and embrace you. All obligations are stopped. Whatsoever obligations you incur or think to possess in this world are discontinued. Only My obligation remains. Your obligation to Me is absolute and these others are all relative and temporary. They are artificial and concocted. Your obligation to Me is wholesale, pure and clear. Try to realize that.”

## **Finding Our Spiritual Fortune**

**Devotee:** So this book, Sri Guru and His Grace, what should be the scope of that book according to you?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Ultimately it will come to Krsna. Krsna is the Guru, who can remove all our doubts and satisfy all of our inquiries. It is through Him. Who can clear all the doubts we may have? Doubt after doubt, one doubt may go and thousands of doubts may come.

*bhidyate hrdaya-granthis chidyante sarva-samsayah*

Who can clear all the suspicions in our mind? It is He, Sri Guru. In this way it will come. Its birth is in intellectualism and its goal is transcendental.

The birth and the destination - that will come to meet together. The birth is also from the potency, and after moving the whole infinite, it will come again into the potency. The infinite in finite, finite infinite. The affectionate connection of the finite with the infinite helps him to live in infinite. All the finite backed by infinite, may be infinite. It depends on the backing . Our Guru Maharaj gave an example: if a poor girl is married to a prince, she had nothing, but by her friendly, affectionate relationship with the prince, now she is turned into a princess. One who had nothing, only by her friendly relationship she gets command over so many things. A jiva's resources may increase in that way.

Intrinsically, the jiva has nothing. He is only a point of the point of the point, but coming in affectionate connection with the Absolute - he gets the facility of all advantages of life of the Absolute. Through affection , he or she is in possession of the Whole.

*angangi-bhavam ajnatva katham samarthyā-nirnaya*

We cannot ascertain anyone's potency or power without considering their relationships, friendly relationships. Israel is a small country and Russia can conquer it in five minutes, but America is there. So the connection of the friends, not only the estimation of a particular thing, but the estimation of the friend's circle, that is all important.

*angangi-bhavam ajnatva katham samarthyā-nirnaya*  
*pasya tittibha-matrena samudro vyakuli-krtah*  
(Hitopadesa, 2..146)

These is one Indian book similar to Aespos Fables, where pandit, Vishnu Sharma has written this sloka: angangi-bhavam ajnatva. That a person and his friend and friend of his friend, without the calculation of this atmosphere, circumstance, we

should not estimate the power of a particular person. He has given an example how tittibha, the smallest bird, he could disturb and highly control the whole ocean. The bird went to his master, he went to his master and in this way they connected with Garuda, the servant, bird-carrier of Krsna. Garuda came to back the small bird and by his threatening the ocean, "I shall drink you until finished!" the ocean came to submit to the small bird, because of the friendly associaton.

**Devotee:** Guru Maharaj, can you explain the meaning of diksa?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The explanation is given in the sastra:

*divyam jnanam yato dadyat kuryat papasya samksayam  
tasmad dikseti sa prokta desikais tattva-kovidaih*

The scholars of the department have explained the meaning of diksa in this way: Diksa is a process through which the transcendental knowledge is imparted towards the disciple, by the preceptor, and all his previous bad tendencies are cast aside. That is normal, diksa, in general. Previous commitments are all cleared and there is light of a new life. New life in relationship with the transcendental substance. A process by which he is given the noble connection with the absolute center and at the same time his previous commitments are all finished. That has been called diksa. It is an awakenment, an inner awakenment of life. Divyam-jnanam it is there, it is suppressed, but that is uncovered. Diksa means the discovering of one's inner wealth and also relief from the outward obligations. With inner awakenment, the outer commitments vanish.

When you reach home, your other engagements for your comforts are all cut off and you find your full sympathetic, necessary comforts there. So, for your own comfort you must have connection with various things outside, but coming home all these are unnecessary, only the home comfort remains. Generally, in a foreign land, we seek comfort and it is supplied, in the hotel, but when we reach home, the hotel comforts are of no more use. "I have got my home here. Here is my home."

As a minor you were taken away from your native place and you are in another's house. But if you can come to know, "there was my father's and mother's house," if you come in that connection and you go there, they can recognize - "Oh, my boy! You were stolen when you were young. We can understand from your face all these things. I am your mother, I am your father, I am your sister!" Then the

hotel no longer has utility. "I have found my home." Something like that. Back to God, back to home. With the inner awakening of the soul he finds his comfortable home and outward links, connections dispenses. That is diksa.

**Devotee:** If siksa also gives Divine Knowledge then what is the difference?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Diksa is the main formula and to work out that formula is mainly there and other things are necessary also to substantiate it, to help it. They are all parts and parcels of diksa. They are already in that formula. "It should be this, it should be that," all the directions are there. But how to substantiate that? Then it will come in details, so many things, sravanam, kirtanam, smarana, vandana, all these things, a thousand things may be necessary.

If a General invades another country, he will chalk out the program. "This way we shall go and attack, we shall have to do this." But practically, when going to do that, so many things come in the way and we have to solve that and march on. The whole plan is to go home from the foreign land. "In this way you can go there." And to substantiate that in practice - so many things may be necessary. But mainly, if you want to go home, you will have to go from here to there, there to there, place to place. Your home is there and the description of the home is there, and where you are, it is also there. And through this process you can reach your home. This is chalked out in the plan. And practically you have to do that. First you are to hire a rikshaw, then go to the station, then go to the airport, then to get a ticket for the plane. In this way so many things are necessary. Divya jnana. From the partial knowledge we are to reach to the final knowledge. This is final. Our home destination, the final prospect.

**First Two Official Meetings  
of Srila Sridhar Maharaj with  
the ISKCON GBC March 1978**

[Portions printed in Sri Guru & His Grace]

[Known present GBC members: Tamal Krsna Maharaj, Jayapataka Maharaj, Jayatirtha Maharaj, Harikesa Maharaj, Satsvarupa Maharaj, Jayadvaita Maharaj, and others]

This talk formed the basis of the ISKCON GBC's 1978 paper entitled,

## THE PROCESS FOR CARRYING OUT SRILA PRABHUPADA'S DESIRES FOR FUTURE INITIATIONS

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** After the departure of our beloved spiritual master we came to offer our respects to you as well as to hear your very esteemed upadesa on certain matters if you would be kind enough.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The gurudeva is mentioned in the sastra with an example. The sisya is like a lotus, and the gurudeva like the water around, just as in a pond or in a lake, gurudeva's position is like water and Krsna is like the sun. As long as the lotus is floating on the water, the sun will give life to the lotus but if the water vanishes that very sun will burn the lotus. Do you follow?

This sort of example is given in the sastra. I cannot exactly remember the sanskrit verse, but such example is there, the water along with the lotus, for without water the sun, Krsna, will burn. Without the help of guru the disciple is nowhere.

Raghunatha Das Goswami Prabhu, the prayojana acarya of the whole Gaudiya philosophy, spiritual system-he has also remarked that yat bunjayate kunjam hrdayate . . .that a python is coming. After the demise, departure of Sri Gurudeva, Rupa-Sanatana, that Govardhan Hill, which is the representation of Sri Krsna Himself, it seems to me just like a big python is coming to devour me and Radha Kunda the holiest place of the divinity of the Gaudiya Sampradaya, like a tigers mouth, it is coming to devour me by the separation of Gurudeva. So much excitement is there, given to me about the absence of my gurudeva, my dearest and my highest guardian, spiritual guardian, who has the most intense affection for me, to nurture me for spiritual purpose. He is not here, how can I tolerate that my everything is gone. All vanishes with his departure-such sort of deep sense of separation will come and the . . .

Where is Bhavananda, is he here?

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** He couldn't come today.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** He told in his lecture, that union in separation is the highest realization. I was very happy to hear from his lips that union in separation vipralambha that is the highest kind of attainment, vipralambha. Without vipralambha nothing else can come to us. Krsna and the opposite thing, that is antithesis, that will come as vipralambha, vihara, Krsna vihara, krsna milan, krsna vihara and without milan there cannot be any other reaction to that, without that separation, vihara, vipralambha. So, vipralambha is the most spacious, most spacious thing pertaining to Krsna consciousness. And if we can have the grace of that plane, forgetfulness. In forgetfulness also, if there is Krsna connection then we are safe, we are set. In the forgetfulness also we shall have the Krsna consciousness also in the background and nothing else-no maya. The safest position, fearless position, that is vipralambha. In vipralambha, gurudeva, in separation to gurudeva, if we can stand then vidyavatam bhagavate parikṣad. I have passed the highest stage, test, examination. In separation also I can retain the memory of sri gurudeva, Sri Krsna.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Maharaj, when our Srila Prabhupada left, then he has given instruction that for initiating and for carrying on the sampradaya there would be eleven - in the beginning, he appointed eleven devotees, his disciples, to be initiating spiritual masters or to accept disciples and in the future that number would also be able to be increased. So we wanted to take your advice on some points as to various details of how these initiating spiritual masters should deal with certain questions. If we could ask questions to you then?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** yes, you may ask.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** He has given explicit desires, but he told us that, on other technical points and other matters of philosophy, if there was question we should approach you. He said that during his...when he was very ill, he had appointed eleven ritviks and he said that after he disappears that these ritviks would continue as initiating spiritual masters and that they could be increased later, that would be decided by the GBC or Governing Body Commission. The first question was, we wondered that some of the disciples had been initiated by Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj. But this Harinama, so they will be taking diksa from one of his disciples, so they wondered, what is their relationship in this type of situation with each of the spiritual masters. So, those who are initiated by our Srila Prabhupada with Harinama, then when they approach one of these

eleven and take second initiation then they would like to know what is the, who is the guru, spiritual master amongst these eleven.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** A Disciple, he may like one - first or third or fourth or fifth, how to solve that.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj** (background): That we must solve.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** A person . .

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** He can take who he likes, he may take whichever one he wants?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** According to his sraddha.

**Devotee:** His faith.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** According to his sraddha a newcomer should be given some time. Who will come to be initiated, he should be given some time for a fair period of time to hear from different persons and then the sraddha, the faith ...

**Devotee:** Will be awakened.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Ah, will be considered to whom he will submit. Do you follow?

**GBC Assembly:** Yes

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** After sravan, then varan, five stages there are; first to hear. First stage is to hear and the second stage, that is varan, that is, acceptance by the guru and the sisya, both the preceptor and the disciple. That is the second stage, varan dasa. Then the sadhana or the attempt for realization will begin. First stage, to hear openly, open field - fair field to hear - then the connection should come between the guru and sisya - preceptor and disciple, both sides. Then that should be better. Sravan dasa, then varan dasa, then sadhana dasa, apan dasa, prapan dasa - five stages in sadhana in spiritual life.

**Devotee:** At which stage does diksa come?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Prapana dasa - last. First sravan

**Devotee:** Hearing.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Sravan, to hear, to listen to and then varan - both preceptor accepts the sisya...

**Devotee:** This is the Harinama stage

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Both Harinama. Harinama is the main thing and diksa only to help Harinama. It is mentioned in Rupa Goswami's writings that Harinama diksa is the main thing.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Accha.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** And the Pancaratric Diksa, it is Bhagavati diksa, Harinama diksa, that means bhagavati diksa. Pancaratic diksa is mantram and that only to help Harinama, that one can reach to the siddhi of Harinama, this mantra will help. Mantra's jurisdiction up to salvation, liberation. And after liberation Harinama continues - Harinama circle - greater circle and diksa is a smaller circle within the Harinama circle. Harinama reaches to the lowest and the highest. And diksa in the middle part - mid circle -that may help to Harinama. Mukta-phal, Harinama, not mantra.... trayateti mantra, this mental, which will relieve us from mental speculation - that is mantram, this manama-dharma that is the worldly mind should, we should get relief from the worldly-mindedness by mantram, but Harinama is a natural thing. It reaches to the lowest and goes to the highest - Harinama.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** So those who have recieved Harinama from Bhaktivedanta Swami, then they are his disciples.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** They will take help, his disciples, may be, and they will take help from the diksa guru, because they are in the sadhana, on the way to the end. So, they'll take the help of this mantra guru. Nama guru, mantra guru. Nama guru is Bhaktivedanta Swami and when he will take mantram from any of his disciples, he will be his mantra guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** So, they will offer respect to both, a disciple will offer respect to both - nama guru and mantra guru?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Mantra guru. Then there is also sannyasa guru. Sannyasa guru is also in the stage - sannyasa or babaji state-that is also a guru. Guru - ONE IN MANY FORMS - siksa guru. Siksa guru: atamat ta mantra gurun siksa gurun.

**Devotee:** guru bhagavat tadan.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** guru bhagavat tadan avare haritaki, vande 'ham sri guru sri gurun. Tamal Krsna Maharaj was saying the other day, "vande 'ham sri gurun sri yuta pada kamalan sri gurun vaisnavams ca. Sri gurun...plural.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Plural

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Plural - vaisnavams ca - one all

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** What is the difference between siksa guru and diksa guru?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Diksa guru, siksa-guruke ta' jani krsnera svarupa (CC Adi 1.47). Caitanya Caritamrta. Siksa guru both extension of Krsna. Guru is Krsna, acaryam mam vijaniyam. Krsna has come there to liberate me, in different appearance, representations. He is coming, Krsna coming, oneness in variegated position.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** (Background): Who can be a siksa guru, who is qualified?

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** who is qualified to be a siksa guru?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** What does he speak?

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Who is qualified? (Bengali): Siksa guru ha upa yukta ke?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Whoever sincerely will help me to go towards Krsna, he is siksa guru. Vaisnava is also siksa guru, vaisnavas. Vaisnavas, siksa guru. Who will come in my connection and will help me to go forward, he is siksa guru. Vartma pradarsaka. And there is vartma pradarsaka, siksa guru, mantra guru, nama guru, then sannyasa guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** What is the relationship between a sannyasi and his

sannyasa guru.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That is tathasta, whom I am much indebted for my spiritual progress, who will help me most in my spiritual progress, there we shall find the main guru. Otherwise, through whom the maximum grace will come to me to take me towards the Supreme entity, he is the...

**Devotee** (background: Who is the main guru?)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** ...supreme guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** What is their relationship of sannyasi and his sannyasa guru - just like a siksa guru?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** First guru, vartma pradarsaka guru is the first guru, who shows the way. He may leave, otherwise, the mantra guru, nama guru, if I am accepted by any nama guru, then as long as the nama guru is present, I am getting only one guru, and after his departure if sannyasa guru or mantra guru comes then I shall offer all my regards to him seeing the representative of the previous guru. Do you follow?

**Assembly:** Yes.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** In the presence of the . . .

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Representative, only vartma pradarsaka maybe present before the real guru.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj**(background): He may remain.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** And other gurus cannot be present, with the diksa guru. Nama guru or diksa guru, that will be one and the same.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Whoever the nama guru is, he should also consequently be...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** If nama guru is living, then he should be mantra guru, he should be sannyasa guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Everything.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Everything, everything. And the ritviks are but vartma pradarsaka guru. When he was living, he appointed so many ritviks, representatives, they are really, they are vartma pradarsaka. Do you follow?

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Vartma pradarsaka.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That, they are showing, they are showing, indicating the way to the guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** At which stage is the karma accepted by the guru?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** When the guru first accepts the disciple, then he will take the charge. Diksa Bhagavate. Diksa is nama diksa. Pancaratric diksa, mantra diksa, at the time of diksa, initiation, the guru accepts him as he is, accepting the charge to wash away the sins, by his instructions. santevas saucindate mana basangam itibi

**Devotee** (background): Harinama?

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj**(aside): Both, the karma is accepted for both, because he washes and cleans at that time.

**Devotee** (aside): At which time?

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Both initiations.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** And the guru, he also does the function by the help of his guru, in this way the chain goes to Krsna but, tada bhaktave, the medium is so transparent that is, no time can be guru parampara. It goes to Krsna, in no time. So the guru should be transparent. Who has wholly given himself to his own guru, he is guru. The cent percent servant of his guru is guru. This is the criterion. Who has wholly dedicated himself to guru, he is guru. Whatever comes to him he already reaches to his guru, this transparent medium.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** And to whatever extent he is not surrendered, that much he won't go forward, (Bengali): jatadur samarpen haya nama tatakun ara

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** tatakun coming to opaqu e- coming to transparent.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Partially.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Partially to opaque, partially to transparent. According to the transparency, guru should be recognized in tathasta vicar. Vijayate tathasta tata, that will be clearly. Tathasta - impartial judgement at the relative and the absolute, two sorts of judgement - absolute and relative.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** You see, just as in the worldly representation, my mother most affectionate to me, his mother is most affectionate to him, but when the comparison will be drawn between two mothers, who is more affectionate, that is another thing, will come. Relative and absolute, calculation. Absolute calculation will get the supermost hand.

**SPM:** So.

Tamal Krsna Maharaj (Background): Next question.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That is to be done amongst you - both relative and absolute. Even a disciple, he may commit error. Disciple, when he is going to accept his guru, he may be erroneous. However, it is the duty of the other Vaisnavas to give him proper guidance. That should also come. In the consideration of absolute realization; these intricate points will arise.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** If the initiating guru, the Nama guru, says he falls down, just as we hear of one Maharaj . . . Says he falls down, from the path by act of providence, then what should the disciple do?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** He will take Name again and after - he may wait for some time. Because, if he was sincere first, he was a sincere disciple to his guru, first, now for some offenses he's neglected by his guru for sometime, he maybe, here and there, astray, led astray. Then he may come again, after that. . . (Bengali conversation) . . . karyakaryam ajanatah, utpatha-prathipannasya, parityago vidhiyate. In Mahabharat, Visvanatha says, statement: Dasa Mahajana , one of Dasa Mahajanas is Bhisma. Bhisma says to Parasurama, he is astra guru. Astra guru, also deva guru, acarya guru. Jiva Goswami Prabhu has taken this example

*guror apy avaliptasya karyakaryam ajanatah  
utpatha-prathipannasya parityago vidhiyate  
(Udyoga-parva 179.25)*

"A guru who does not know what is to be done and what is not to be done, who has left the path of devotional service, should be abandoned." Mahabharata

If he goes astray, then he should be left, but there may be circumstances for some time. By the inconceivable desire of Krsna he may go astray, and he may come back again, come back again. So, disciple may wait for some time.

**Devotee** (Background): See if he comes back.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** And this is very unfortunate for the disciple when he gets such a test. In Harinama Cintamani, written by Bhaktivinode Thakur, you will find this elaborately described. Harinama Cintamani by Bhaktivinode Thakur, there we will find this guru tyaja chapter, how he has dealt with it carefully. Harinama Cintamani.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** So, in ISKCON, there are many initiating gurus . .

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Just as you see, if a son disobeys his father, then the father may be indifferent to the son and for sometime he may be [taken from the will] excluding him but after sometime, he sees that the son comes back, is obedient, then again he may correct his will, it may be like that.

*api cet suduracaro bhajate mam ananya-bhak  
sadhur eva mantavyah samyag vyavasito hi sah*  
(Bhagavad-gita 9.30)

" Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination." So, only very abruptly, we should not deal with such things of unfortunate incidence, wait and see. Generally, in his own zone, he will perform diksa, generally. But there should be special arrangement. Aki mandire... (Bengali)

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Now, are five disciples in one temple, each with a different guru of these eleven. (Bengali)

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** The pictures on the altar, different things, how will these be managed? How they would?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Then, the arca, who is performing the worship, he will

worship his, the portrait of his own guru as guru, and other gurus as Vaisnava, he will worship. Do you follow?

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Yes, and those pictures will be put on far left side?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, they should be in a position that should be adjusted. They should be dealt as Vaisnava, after guru puja.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Guru puja.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** After his own guru puja, he will perform guru puja and others and then Vaisnava puja. The other gurus will come in the rank of Vaisnava guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** So everyone's picture could be there, all of the...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** All the portraits could be there.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** And he will worship his own guru as guru.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** One guru as guru and the others as Vaisnava. Vaisnava siksa guru.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** But, explain. In one temple, in one of our Maths, the disciples may have many different gurus, just like there are eleven persons now. So, say three of those eleven persons may be the gurus of the disciples in that Math, then how to know whose picture to put on the ...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So, to get out of this difficulty, the zonal preference should be maintained.

**Assembly (Background):** The zonal preference should be maintained to get out of this problem.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** To get out of this difficulty, as much as possible, but what I m saying is, that may be applicable easily in the branch Maths. But in the main Maths, Mayapur, Vrndavana, where all is interested keenly, difficulty will arise there.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** So there, there can be a group photo. (Laughter)

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Group photo, say it in Bengali. [to Srila Sridhar Maharaj]

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** (Bengali)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Group photo, group photo. But then, then also a difficulty will arise, his guru. Guru photo, but, everyone will like that his guru must be in the center.

**Assembly:** Laughter.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** (Serious): No, No, No, We...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** This difficulty may arise.

**Hamsadutta Maharaj:** We can take eleven different group photos, each man in the center.

**Background noise:** (Devotees discussing amongst themselves)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** But, you may start with your gurudeva, Swami Maharaj, in the center and others as parsada. You must start in this way now. Then the time will help you gradually.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Thank you. Those mandirs which Srila Prabhupad, our Bhaktivedanta...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Prabhupada in the center, group photo, manage in this way, Prabhupada in the center and all others, who will initiate, those that will initiate, as parsada.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** This is in the main branches or in the subbranches? This is in the main Math or everywhere?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** This will be maintained everywhere.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Everywhere.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Everywhere.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Group photo.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Synthesis will help you most. As much as we can synthesize that will come to help you more.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** The disciples of our gurus picture, shouldn't be on the Vyasasana. It was suggested that if that Vyasasana was kept for Prabhupada, a second Vyasasana for others could be installed. This was one idea, we do not know what is the proper etiquette.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That asana should not be occupied by any of the disciples, because the disciples who are initiating, the initiating disciples, present guru, he will also regard his guru as superior to him. So he cannot occupy that seat. Do you follow?

**Aside:** Even his picture?

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Similarly, his picture should not occupy. (Bengali)

**Background assembly:** A little picture on the bottom.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** (Bengali) Just next to that seat, the present gurus seat should be given, should be placed.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Second seat.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Second seat, should be given to the initiating guru, present initiating guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** So, on the original vyasasana, no picture, or...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The picture of Swami Maharaj, a picture will be introduced there and just a little below, nearest seat will be for the present acarya. The present disciple will say that he is giving honor to his own guru. That, will rather impress the disciple, that even the siddha guru, he is also giving respect to his own guru. This way, I must learn. A guru should be always kept above.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** But in those temples which are now newly established, by zonal guru, in that place then, this would not be required? (Bengali)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Even in new organization also, the same thing will go

on, because whatever you are creating, that is with the impression, first impression with him, from him.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Thats a fact.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That will all come within, within the same administration.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** So, when the, such disciple does guru puja at these asanas, then he will first do the puja to his guru and then to his guru.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Then his, his guru, the Deities and afterwards all other gurus or Vaisnavas.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Vaisnavas are after the Deities.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** After the Deities.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Which mantra?

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Just like if Jayapataka gives one of his new men initiation-if Jayapataka Swami gives diksa to somebody, how that sisya will offer his pramans to Jayapataka, in what words, what mantra?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** In ordinary mantra of guru puja, until and unless his disciples compile a mantra, a special mantra for him, he is not to go to arrange the mantra or pranam, but when his disciples will come and make a mantra for guru-puja, they will do like that, otherwise a general mantra:

*om ajnana-timirandhasya jnanjana-salakaya  
caksur unmilitam yena tasmai sri-gurve namah*

[ I offer my respectful obiesance unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge. ]

With this ordinary common mantra, it will be performed, but when his disciples will come to such a stage as to compose a special mantra for him, which has special characteristic mentioned there, then they will perform with that mantra.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** To say, nama om visnupadaya . . . (Bengali)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, that may be, sisya will always say that, visnupada, the representative of Visnu.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** That's a general mantra.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** He is in the feet of Krsna. nama om vishupadaya . . . common and other things where the sisya will see in the guru that should be mentioned there, special characteristics, that may be general and visnupadaya, krsna prestaya bhutale, it is all common.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** (Bengali)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** And then, the name will come and the special characteristics may be mentioned there.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Accha.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That will be, that will come from the disciples, that customarily in Sanskrit.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** (Background): Etiquette of choosing the guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** Should be pure Sanskrit?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Correct Sanskrit language, otherwise you see, one fine point, those in our position also, our gurudeva, he dictated in English some instructions once, but little faulty from the standpoint of correct English, then our one professor Bhaal, disciple, he told that dictionary should be corrected. What gurudeva says, it is alright.

**Assembly:** Laughter. Jaya.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Do you follow? Grammer and dictionary should be corrected, but what guru says it is alright. Then another little higher position disciple, he told, that , that is the lowest class disciples statement. The higher class disciple will see that what guru wants from him, what sort of service he wants, that correct English should go to establish hisposition to the public, so when it comes to the sisya, it will adjust.

Suppose your gurudeva, when you are going to take his photo, in ordinary dress, he comes before the photo maker. But the sisya will, no, no. You should stand in

this posture, with this dress dress you must take the photo. Do you follow?

**Assembly:** Yes.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Very clear, very clear.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So, in language also, gurudeva gives the main point, but the language, if it is a little faulty, faulty to the public, the sisya will come, no this should be couched in good language, that is not harmful. Do you follow?

**Assembly:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So, in Sanskrit, what your guru Maharaj has told, namo sarasvatam-all these things, you say, I can't follow whether it is correct grammatically, but it will be your duty according to my opinion to couch it well with the language. And that will be the greatest service, service of higher quality, and to say that dictionary should be corrected and the grammer should be corrected, what my guru has said, but practically that will be kanistha-adhikari service. The lower sisya, the lower status service....To explain his prestige and position, you will dress him in good dress.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** For giving vanaprastha, is there any ceremony.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Vanaprastha and sannayasa-by the simple desire of the guru.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** On the desire of the guru, no special ceremony.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** On his order.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** On his order. (Bengali) Can there be any restriction on the activities of the guru?

**Devotee:** (Background): These are very complicated.

**Harikesa Maharaj:** Because we are working within a government with. We have GBC, Governing Body, its a Governing Body of the whole society.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes.

**Devotee:** So, it is possible that even if some members of the Governing Body, they are not gurus, but can the Governing Body as a whole make a restriction on the activity of an individual guru.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** (Laughter) A most difficult thing, (more laughter), a non-guru comes to regulate the gurus. Is it not?

Assembly: Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Those who are not fit for guru, who are not considered to be fit for guru, he will come to guide the guru? So many gurus, is it? So, it would be better that the Governing, all the members of the Governing Body were guru, and they are all acaryas.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** They are all acaryas.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The assembly of acaryas, they will consult with each other.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** And make rules.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The Acarya Sabha, the assembly of the acaryas, they will perform the function about all the spiritual matters. Acarya board. There should be an Acarya Board to guide the whole thing from behind, without non-acarya within the meeting. Then if anybody within the meeting, then if anybody is considered to be the most expert for the management, he will work under the Acarya Board. What he has said, you must carry out that at present, but I think gradually you will have to ....

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj** (Background): Form a board.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Get new experience.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** From practical experience.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Practical experience, you will have to get.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Time will guide us.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** You are suffering a great deal from that. So, the non-

acarya, non-acarya will come the majority speaking, non-acarya.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Yes, the majority is non-acarya.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Non-acarya, that will, according to my opinion, that will play, create a difficulty.

(Meeting continued)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** In our system-both the autocracy and democracy-it cannot go together, cannot go together. But ours is a autocratic thing, extremely autocratic. Guru is all in all. As you will do and experience yourself, the guru, our submission to guru is unconditional. We've felt great difficulty. Submission to guru is unconditional. So, when I shall see that my guru's followers are being oppressed by other guru, another Vaisnava, it will create a great disturbance in the mind of the sisya.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** A disciple.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** To grow, his own sraddha, faith, absolute faith.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** What about a board of gurus?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** But, our Krsna conscious conception of Godhead has come to relieve you. Whom we think the Supreme-most Krsna, Yasoda is whipping Him and Nanda's paduka (shoes), He is taking on the head-the Supreme-most devata, Deity. So, in this way also, we can adjust-both the absolute faith and the relative position of the non-absolute. These two things should be harmonized. Reaction. You see, after the departure of our gurudeva, it was thought that one acarya should be made-then, naturally, different acaryas came. Then, when some of us proposed many acaryas, then I told one thing. If you want, if anyone marries, a separate room is necessary. Do you follow? When, so long as you do not marry, you may not have any separate room, but as soon as you will marry, you want a separate house to... Whenever a Vaisnava does not initiate he does not want any special place or special respect, but whenever he initiates, he is absolute in the eyes of his disciples. From the corresponding impression he will be carried out. And the sisya will, cannot tolerate that other, any other Vaisnava will come to disturb the absolute position of my guru. This is hearts feeling-sentiment. How to adjust, very difficult thing.

(Background discussion)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So, it will be very difficult to manage practically the democratic, absolute characteristic. Difficult, but still we shall have to go on and make, according to the will of Krsna it will be adjusted.

**Jayapataka Maharaj:** So, the initiating gurus, then, it would be more practical for them to have a separate board to decide on addition of new gurus.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** No, what I came to conclusion with these experiences . . . but how in this great universal institution that should be applied? At least one place should be there where the disciples can get their guru exclusively, that, but that will not be possible practically. Where they will find my guru's absolutely of the. Suppose the birthday of his guru comes, the disciples gather on the birthday of their guru. They will, with all their devotion, they will worship him exclusively-that he is the representative of God, of Krsna-but other disciples, they may not feel very much encouragement in their behavior. They will see that our faith to our acarya is being disturbed by that wave. That my guru is not absolute -- very subtle point of sentiment and all divine.

In Krsna's camp, also Radharani, and Candravali and others, you see. So, we must prepare ourselves for that. To the farthest point then, I put one question to my gurudeva, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur. Rupa Goswami, he feels Krsna one way, Sanatana another and in various books also, we find in different ways and why? "He is adhoksaja." That was the answer, He is adhoksaja. He is not bound to come within our fist-of our brain, our speculation above speculation. Still, we are to march on. The solution of anything in all its detailed characteristics is impossible, about Krsna. And that and He-anything pertaining to Him-all acintya and must be kept on the head, overhead. Acintya, adhoksaja. We cannot reach into a particular solution as all complete and perfect; it is not given to him that way. In this way we are to march on and on, without thinking of any finish, any limit or any final solution. That is impossible. Still we must go on and on in the infinite, like a bird who is flying in the infinite space. Finite and infinite must meet in their own position. Hare Krsna.

**Assembly:** Hare Krsna. Jaya.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Go with fair feeling, go on with fair feeling, this utmost

I can suggest to you.

**Tamal Krsna Maharaj:** Maharaj, we are so much grateful.

**Assembly:** Jaya.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That will be fair for you, that you will extend it from the ritvik board. Who is already empowered, they will extend, their consideration. They can extend their scope. In this way you move, it will have spiritual characteristic. Do you follow?

**Devotee:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** These eleven, they will extend themselves. From this point, it will be-the area of the acaryaship will be extended. Then gradually twenty-four or more, but it will spread from this point, extend. Bigger, bigger, bigger. That you may do, to keep the spiritual characteristic of the extension of the Acarya Board.

**Satsvarupa Maharaj:** I had one question that Bhavananda Maharaj asked me to ask about the initiating gurus. He, on Gaura Purnima, he initiated some of the Bengali boys, second initiation. So, he is their diksa guru. He wanted to know what respect is required of the diksa guru. They have already taken Bhaktivedanta Swami as their Nama guru. Should they, when they see Bhavananda Maharaj make pranams or should they worship with picture or is that not required for the diksa guru? What is the proper worship of the diksa guru?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The disciples of Bhavananda Maharaj should see Nama guru also within him and he should be, when in arcana, he should be worshiped as guru, mantra guru in mantra words. Arcana is performed in this Pancaratric, it is tantric mantra, so diksa guru will be worshiped in the arcana function and Nama guru in bhajan-Nama bhajan. And in general case, both should be seen as far as possible in one, that he is in at present, he is present in him for me.

**Satsvarupa Maharaj:** But for sannyasa guru, that kind of worship is not required?

(Bengali)

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Sannyasa guru is not generally worshiped, but it is a

form for propaganda we have to take. In sastra, of course, mantra guru has been given the preference, mantra guru. But nama guru is bhagavata diksa guru-that is more comprehensive, mantra to help the Nama bhajan.

**Devotee:** Mantra guru's portrait is worshiped also?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Portrait worship. In portrait worship, mantra guru is the principle thing, that is, mantra, rather, local help. Nama is of eternal help. Harinama. After liberation, Nama will continue and mantra will disappear. Mantra up to liberation, as long as I am in the world, the mental world, mantra will relieve me from the mental concoction, but Nama is always with me even after liberation.

**Devotee:** Kama Gayatri-Krsna mantra, it will not-only up to liberation.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Kama Gayatri, Krsna mantra. It will be automatic at that time. It will be automatic. The desired result will be given by the mantra and the mantra will disappear. It is automatic at that time.

**Jayatwaita Maharaj:** Now, some of our godbrothers that we have known. . .

**Another devotee:** (Bengali.) You tell and I will explain.

**Jayatwaita Maharaj:** But now, we have been familiar with them. Now they have taken this position of initiating guru, so they are worshiped by their disciples-nikunjo yuno rati keli siddhai-that verse. So, how are we, it is very difficult for us to understand, how these people whom we have known, are we to understand they are, have assumed that position, that now they are associating with Krsna. How should we understand?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Now, it should be adjusted in twofold ways-the disciples in a sort of disposition, and godbrothers in another disposition. You see, when Krsna enters Ranga-mancha, He is appearing to different persons in different ways. So, for the disciples the genuine guru, Krsna, will come and play in that line there and it may not be seen, shown to his godbrothers. This way it should be [understood].

**Devotee:** Seen?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** ...it should be thought. Do you follow?

**Jayatwaita Maharaj:** Yes, very clear.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Krsna can show Himself differently to different persons. You see, in madhurya rasa, one is seeing Krsna in one way, and vatsalya rasa, Yasoda is seeing in another way, the servants seeing another way, a rsi, a rsi will see Gargamuni in another conception, as He will, as He likes to show Himself to anybody, he will see like that. You may look to Him in his own ways, but still you will have to behave in such a way that the newcomer's sraddha is not disturbed. Do you follow?

**Jayatwaita Maharaj:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** When after the departure of our Guru Maharaj, one of us was acarya, then we all, I myself composed a poem for pranama, but I specifically prepared it for his disciples as they will look to him and for myself I have my own conception. And that should be kept in the mental world and not outside, because the newcomers will be disturbed, their sraddha will be disturbed. The newcomer should be encouraged-that it is very difficult to collect our faith and even regard and offer it to guru. It is very difficult for a fallen soul. So, the maximum regard that they can collect, when within him and offer it to guru it will be our lookout. So, what the conception about my godbrother I may have, I may foster that within the heart but don't disturb the disciple.

Of course, as much as it is possible, if it is by unfortunately, if that acarya falls himself, proves himself to be lacking in that capacity then and if that comes to be sufficient degree, then some steps may be taken. Otherwise, as long as possible, the rank should be respected, but rank is but the guinea stamp-man is the gold for that. Tathasta vicar and apeksi vicar. Absolute consideration and relative consideration. And your Einstein says that no absolute consideration is possible in this world-all relative. So, both relative and absolute consideration go side by side.

Disciples should be encouraged by the relative consideration mostly and godbrothers are more free for absolute consideration, but still they should not disturb the newcomers in their premier position and caste, but if unfortunately any bad incident happens, then of course we may have to do some unhappy action, but let God save us from that disastrous condition. That should be our feeling. Hare Krsna.

**Assembly:** Hare Krsna.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** In Radha Kunda, when our Vrndavan circumambulation was going on in perhaps 1932, Prabhupada, on the banks of Brahma Kunda, he delivered a lecture and told, as I remember, that divinity, perfect divinity has come down thru my gurudeva, after my gurupada padma, it is perfect divinity come down, then this consideration may be practiced. So: acaryam mam vijaniyam by Gods special grace, this is one of his functions that go to the low-to the lowest person and to take him from there gradually, this is one of the eternal functions of the Supreme Lord. There is gradation, the gradation section, hierarchy.

Everywhere there is Gods presence and his helping tendency is also present everywhere, only to convert the free will, free will to acarya, free will of every jiva, even in creeper section, in tree and animal there is also at heart God there, Paramatma in that stage. So there is gradation.

*aloke bava paroksa badha veduryam balanam usasanan*

Just a teacher of a child, by installment he will supply the truth, not the whole truth to a child, but partially, gradually. So, the sastra, the scripture has also taken that path by installments. So guru is also, teacher is also in that way represented, just as sastra to the lowest, then superior, superior, superior. Teacher is also, guru is also. In that

way, it is coming. Then at certain position, a workable truth. Otherwise, mainly within maya it is also working. Maya is not exclusively excluded from the interference of Godhead. Everywhere there is the presence of the Supreme. Otherwise, He is not Supreme.

Everywhere is influence by gradation, degree it is. Then where we are, we are . . . . human culture, in human society. But, in other sections also there is also a sort of culture amongst the dogs, amongst the tigers there is also a sort of culture, a society there. Aniti, everywhere. But suddha bhakti, a workable ,substantial, true atmosphere. Anyhow, we have come. We must do from there. With this spacious and generous consideration, that we cannot bind down the activities of the Supreme Lord in any way. Nor sympathetic to the more poor. Always, He's trying to keep up to the top. That is general question, but that is not practical to the extreme. Once, I asked a doctor, do you know everything? You go to cure a person, but do you know everything? You may do harm to him by applying a false medicine or by applying one

medicine another disease may come. Have you got any perfect knowledge? How do you venture to treat a man? He submitted, but a reaction came in me. Then, how the world will go on? Everywhere there is no full truth, no full knowledge. Then the doctors, the teachers, they are all finished. There, non-cooperate is it possible, not practical. How much is... Sincerity is the best thing to judge. Sincerely, whatever I do, think it is good ever.

The other day, I told, that when I feel that Harinama, Krsna-nama has removed my trouble, I am eligible to recommend it to another person who will do it. It will help you. If I sincerely feel that this medicine has helped me, then I have got some right to give it to others, suggest others. Oh, take Krsna-nama. It will deliver you from all the troubles. From the lowest point it begins the help, the activity of acarya. I have felt that I have got relief. With good will, I shall offer it to another persons, just do it. From there it may begin, the position of acarya. You see, and then it will go on. You see, we are also doing in our own way. What little service we do to the society, and Swami Maharaj has also done, but he has done like an ocean and we are like so many tanks, ponds. But still, we are going on, yare dekha, tare kaha krsna-upadesa.

**Satsvarupa Maharaj:** Thank you very much, Srila Sridhar Maharaj.

**Devotee:** Virudha - virodha.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Viridha.

**Devotee:** Maladjustment.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Maladjustment. Anomaly, not proper adjustment. The opposite to proper adjustment is maladjustment, wrong adjustment, erroneous. That is no adjustment. Erroneous position, that is maya. Maya has got two functions-one to cover and another to scatter. Viksep. Averaon and viksep, these two tendencies of maya. First it screens and then it . .

.

**Devotee:** Dissipates.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It misdirects.

**Devotee:** Viksepa means misdirecting?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** First, there is screen, that is covered. What is like darkness and what darkness does, this way or that way we cannot understand; hither and tither we move.

**Devotee:** Avera-atma, viksep-atma.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Viksep-atma. And harmonises. Svarup sakti is also the harmonising potency. Harmonising potency. Discord and potency is maya. Harmonising potency is svarup sakti, Yoga-maya. Hare Krsna.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** (Background): Can we ask?  
(Bengali)

**Devotee:** To keep the integrity of the relationship between the . . .

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It as question of sraddha. God's lila cannot be finished. God's lila in His feeling also, there is no limit, so touch an ocean is also... From one side I am touching from the bank, touching the ocean, that is also touching and if you go a mile deep into the ocean, there also you are making some progress-but the infinite you are in connection. In comparison to the infinite it is nothing. Is it not? So, with genuine sraddha, we can come near the position and my attempt, nikunjo yuno, and all these things, it is. The sun is there, but suppose a black glass is also there ,then I cannot see the full sun, is it not? And if I show but still I am seeing the sun through a black glass.

**Devotee:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So, the opaque nature is opposing and as much as it is discovered, I am seeing the true thing, but sraddha can take us in connection with that thing, sraddha, proper quality, not false sraddha, not imitation sraddha, real sraddha comes near that real entity, the Supreme Entity. And as much as it is increased, I go deeper and deeper. Do you follow?

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** So, in that way gradually one can come to that point.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Gradually, so the beginning, with genuine sraddha, the beginning also should be respected. God willing, he [a newer devotee] may go and pass me and I am going slow, he may go quickly and pass, overcome me one day. With all this possibility we should try to give respect to any beginner.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** Respect to . . .

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Any beginner.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** He may surpass me one day.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Because he has come in connection with the real thing, God willing, he may surpass me and go ahead. One day it may be possible. So, it is Yogamaya's activity, God's favor. All these are working for Him, so we cannot be too much proud. All this humility, we shall have to deal with these matters, not haughtiness. With submissive faith we have to see everything, with such angle of vision from such angle patience.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** So, in this way, we can understand our position, we can understand our own position.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** When I joined the Math, not joined but I have come to take a decision whether I shall join the Math, that is, take initiation from Guru Maharaj. In Mayapur, like today, the function has been finished and those that came are gradually going away. Prabhupada is sitting in a canvas chair. I also sat nearby. He is speaking to the people. No, don't deceive me. You kept understanding that you will come to worship Krsna. Now, anyhow we come and are going away, going away. I think that you are all deceiving me. In this way he spoke. Then he said, "The one who built the temple that year, that Caitanya Math temple, he was sitting on the floor." Then one person amongst us said, "Oh, Madhan Babu has not even been given a mat. He is on the floor, sitting on the bare floor." Then Prabhupada told that Madhan Babu is Nirupadi-Vaisnava. Here is your point. Madhan Babu is Nirupadi-Vaisnava, but I have some upadi. Do you know the meaning of upadi?

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** Designation, bodily title, person.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** I am acarya. I am holding acaryas position. I should be given some position, some respect. So, I am given a chair and he is Nirupadi-Vaisnava. He has got no such designation to show to the people about his

devotional bhakti. He is taking his seat anywhere and everywhere. He may do it Niru-when upadi. Acarya's position is also upadi, designation, rank. Rank should be respected. You know the son is the judge nirod. This is so the designation is there and this protocol we should be, we should observe.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** But aside from giving, is it just a matter of formality?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** If you think the person who is doing the function of acarya, he is into tatastha vicar, absolute consideration, his adhikara is lower to you, lower. Still, you should formally give special honor to him because he is in that position, You see, the father is giving the honor to the chair of the judge-nirod. Like that you should do, otherwise the social fashion will be disturbed, is it not?

**Devotee:** Son may be a judge and pleader may be father. Father must give respect to the chair.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Give respect to the chair, so that sort of something like that, something like that adjustment should be kept in the mission. This is when you are alone the acarya brother and non-acarya brother when alone, you can mix freely, if you can give a slap to his cheek.

**Devotee:** Laughter.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** But, when publicly amongst his disciples, you must show . . .

**Devotee:** Proper as he desires.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That sort of behavior, conduct should be maintained to keep up the peace and the activity possible.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** How should one himself understand, suppose I am empowered by my Guru Maharaj to initiate disciples, so they are offering me worship, nikunjo yuno rati keli siddhai, but how am I to understand they are saying like this, that I am in this position, but does it mean that because I have been given that position of guru actually I have got?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That sloka you know?

**Devotee:** I may not know, Sukadeva Goswami may not know...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** aham veti suka veti vyasa veti va. Yes, Sridhar Swami wrote the commentary of Bhagavatam and it was written differently from the previous commentary, so the scholars refused to accept that commentary as universal, especially the Sankarikes. Then they put it to a test, that it should be kept in the temple of Viswanatha and if he . . ., Kasi Viswanatha Mahadev Siva, and if he accepts, then we shall all accept the commentary.

**Devotee:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Then from the Siva temple the revelation came, the purpose, the real purpose of Bhagavatam is very difficult to conceive. Only these few of us we know the real purpose: aham veti Mahadeva says. I know the real, the true purpose of Bhagavatam, suko veti, and Sukadeva the disciple, son of Vyasadeva, he knows it thoroughly. aham veti suko veti vyaso veti na veti va and the author of Bhagavatam, he may know or not. Do you follow? Then your question is answered.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** How, I don't understand?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Mahaprabhu, when He is teaching Sanatana Goswami, He says to Sanatana, 'Krsna is going to give His kindness to you through Me. I am talking to you like a man to man and I feel many things passing through Me to you. I feel that much, but I do not know that I have myself got that thing.' Do you follow? Then solution.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** Yes, that's very clear. Thank you very much.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It is possible, it is wonderful, but still we find it there not unreasonable, not understandable.

**Jayadvaita Maharaj:** That last explanation, is that the explanation of transparent via medium-that the guru-these new gurus they must be transparent and then it will work.

Bengali.

**Devotee:** Accha, simply by functioning in their roles it will work like that.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** You see, when of course sincere cases. . . when the

second great war broke out in Calcutta, Dalhousie Square-military dress was written on the wall, was painted on the wall and there was a saying, "Just take this garb and the dress will tell you what you have to do." Do you follow? Take the military dress and the dress will direct what you have to do, what will be your duty. So, a sincere man when he has taken a particular charge, anyhow he will make out what to do, the duty. What is the duty of that post if sincere, and God will help. God helps those who help themselves. You have taken the charge and charge has not come from chance but there is some underground link and then if you try to do then help will come to you. He is not a cheat. You have sincerely taken a charge of the master and the master is not a cheat. He will come to you with all his might, do this. I am helping, I am at your back. When we are all sincere, these things will happen like this.

## **Focused to Sri Guru**

In Srimad-Bhagavatam Narada Muni gives the following advice as a general recommendation as to how to get free from unwanted desires, kama:

*asankalpaj jayet kamam, krodham kama-vivarjanat  
arthanartheksaya lobham, bhayam tattvavamarsanat*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam, 7.15.22)

We are not to allow ourselves to contact or enter any plan of life. We are to be always open to deal with the present, not with any plan for the future. If we do not have any kama, any plan, then anger may not come.

When there is some obstruction in fulfilling a plan we become angry in life, but if there is no plan of life then we are always open to serve the present and in that way we are clear – free from debt and obligation. Whatever comes in the present we do as our duty. But when there is a plan we become angry if any disturbance will come in carrying that out.

*Arthanartheksaya lobham* – and lobha, greed, can be conquered just by seeing the reactions of money. If we collect energy from outside, that money comes

with the sin and mentality of the man from whom we collected it. It is contaminated with their particular mentality. If we have this conception we may not have greed for any energy that comes under our command.

Bhayam tattvavamarsanat – we apprehend so many good and bad things – we fear. In order to conquer fear we are to cultivate understanding of the real nature of this plane: it all runs by the Lord's will but we are throwing in our separate interest which comes back to us as reaction. We are to accept that our individual opinion may not be successful here. Everything that comes in clash with the Absolute Will shall have to vanish. With this idea we will be open in the present and free from any future plans.

All these advices are expressed, but in the end it is given:

*etat sarvvam gurau bhaktya, puruso hy anyasa jayet*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 7.15.25)

“There is only one thing by which we can conquer all these abnormalities. What is that? Guru-bhakti. ‘I am a servant of my Guru. Whatever he shall say, I shall do.’ Concentrate on this point.”

We are to withdraw all plans and put everything just in this one point: “Whatever will come through the Guru, the representation of the Lord, I shall do that.” There is no necessity of any other thinking, planning, designing, etc.: “I want this, I shall do that,” is all unnecessary. We are only to concentrate on one point. The representation of the Supreme is there – the Guru – and what is wanted by him, we shall do that. Everything is focussed to that one point without seeing anything else.

Exclusive focus is illustrated in the example of Dronacharya testing his students by asking them to aim their arrows at the eye of a toy bird placed in a tree. Each aimed in turn, and Dronacharya asked, “What do you see?” The first replied, “The bird, the tree, etc.”

Dissatisfied, Dronacharya said, “Stand aside.”

But when it came to the turn of Arjuna, he replied, “I can see the bird.”

“Can you see the whole of the bird?”

“No. Only the head.”

“The Whole of the head?”

“No. Only the eye of the bird.”

“You cannot see anything else?”

“No. I can see only the eye of the bird.”

Only then was Dronacharya satisfied.

In this way all should be concentrated to one point, “I have connection with the representation of the Supreme, the Guru, and I am at his disposal. Whatever he shall say, I shall do. I am not a servant of anyone else.”

*etat sarvvam gurau bhaktya, puruso hy anjasa jayet*  
(Bhagavatam 7.15.25)

In that way there will be no anger, no lust – nothing. If one can do such exclusive Guru-bhakti it will strongly keep him in a safe position, and that is the key to very easy and quick success.

*yasya deve para bhaktir, yatha deve tatha gurau*  
*tasyaite kathita hy arthah, praksante mahatmanah*  
(Svetasvatara Upanisad 6.23)

A person who serves Guru and Krsna can understand the real meaning of the Scriptures, otherwise the real meaning will not be revealed and one will not be able to follow their real purpose. That is the apriori method of studying the Vedas.

*Acharyavan puruso veda* – the meaning of the Upanisads can be understood only by those who have their Guru. Not everyone can understand the real meaning of the Upanisads, but only those who are at the disposal of a real Guru can have access there. By intellectualism we cannot understand their real meaning. Only by approaching the Guru with a serving attitude will the meaning be revealed. He will come and express Himself to us, and we are to have the mood, “I am unqualified and low, but He will come and give admission irrespective of any intellect, study or anything else on my part.”

Research scholarship in the illusory world is all quite a different approach. Scientific research is going from one misconception to another misconception. It is all misconception. It is error and has falsehood at the root. *Acintya-bhedabheda*. The centre is such that everything is at His command: “Let there be light”, and there was light. “Let there be water,” and there was water. The research scholars try to research the nature and cause of everything, but ultimately it is all His sweet will. Neglecting that, they simply research, research, research, but if His will is withdrawn, everything will be falsified.

We do not want to apparently deep knowledge of the researchers. We have no concern with what is actually this partial, infinitesimal, surface knowledge which is so attractive to those floating, giving and taking, in that section. It is all false and black-marketeering. Everyone's money is black and they are transacting with that. In this society false notes are being circulated as real currency.

*Acintya-bhedabheda*. Everything is His will, and it is the greatest adventure to search for Krsna, to search for the root of the whole infinite. It needs sufficient courage and preparedness to face the risk. To go to discover the North Pole or the highest peak of the Himalayas needs so much courage and involves risk, then what to speak of the courage necessary to find out the Absolute Cause of the Whole. Internal courage – spiritual courage – is necessary. We are to have soul's courage and have the confidence of deep faith. We are to understand the noble character of the faith within us.

Without electricity we cannot have connection with the moon and other planets. Our hands and eyes cannot contact there. Faith can connect us with the farthest things. All other methods fail. Faith is substantial, it is not part of an illusion of the mind. The whole mind is a concocted thing: it is a source of forgery. Faith is not to be found there. Faith is a function of the soul.

We cannot even see what is within our own body without the help of some apparatus. Through faith, *sraddha*, the soul can approach and see the higher world.

By faith we can approach the highest, noblest thing, not by our hand or by the help of any mundane elements.

## **Fools Rush In Where Angels Fear**

**Devotee:** In Sri Brahma-samhita it is described that Sri Sri Radha and Krsna are seated on a divine throne, and the whorl of the lotus flower upon which They are seated is described as a hexagonal figure. What is the meaning of this hexagonal figure?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** I am sorry, but we are not to enter into the discussion of such higher and subtle position of the Lila of Radha-Krsna. That is not to be brought into public, and that is the distinction between the Gaudiya Math and the sahajiya section. The sahajiyas are trying to imitate all these things, but we have no faith in imitation. The higher Lila will come in an individual case, and it will awaken in an irresistible way. When the program of the sadhana stage is finished it will come automatically, spontaneously. We are believers in that, and not to know the form already and then we will reach there - that is not the policy accepted by Guru Maharaja, Prabhupada (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura): *pujala raga-patha gaurava-bhange*. Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura also said, "Stick to the rulings of the class you are fit for, then you will see automatically."

*yatha yatha gaura-padaravinde  
vindeta bhaktim krta-punya-rasih  
tatha tathotsarpati hrady akasmad  
radha-padambhoja-sudhambu-rasih  
(Sri Chaitanya-chandramrta 88)*

Strictly stick to Gaura-lila , Mahaprabhu, and you will find automatically within your heart that Radha-rasa-sudhanidhi is flowing. Don't attempt directly to have it. It will come automatically, spontaneously. Not intellectually you shall approach that, for that will give you a bad prejudice. Not only that, but it will be harmful prejudice and you will have to expend more energy to do away with that layer of misunderstanding. So our Srila Prabhupada did not allow these things. Do your duty in your plane, according to what you deserve, and that will come naturally. That is his instruction all through, not only temporarily, but all through. Don't go to be a disbeliever and be very eager to see the final result. Don't do like that, for then you will get Maya instead of Yoga-maya. He knows it fully well, She knows it fully well, when you are to be taken in to the confidential area, and that cannot be acquired by any other thing but His sweet will - the flow of Her sweet will, or His sweet will. Try to have the natural thing, not any thing of imitation or any reflection. Reflection and shadow, these two kinds of misconceptions may come there. Reflection is more dangerous. In Harinam also it has been stated like that. Reflection and shadow, both are misguiding. And we are to cross that. On our way that sort of temptation may come, but we must not think that everything will come within the fist of our intellect.

*achintyah khalu ye bhava  
na tams tarkena yojayet*

Don't take the inconceivable under the jurisdiction of reason. When it will be extended to you, you will be astounded to find only a peep into that. Na tams tarkena yojayet: don't try to drag that into the zone of reason. This is autocratic in its nature. It may come in one shape to you, it may go in another shape to another gentleman. It is so expansive and so free in its nature. It is infinite. Rather the Infinite is the base of those Pastimes. Always prepare yourself. Hanker. But don't make it an object of your experience. When Mahaprabhu talked about the higher Lilas it was as if He was in a trance. As if in a trance He gave a description of His wonderful experience of Krsna-lila. Several times we find that sort of deep Lila: the higher Lila of Krsna being related by Mahaprabhu Himself: the Govarddhan-lila and the Jalakeli-lila when He jumped unconscious into the ocean and for a few hours was carried by the waves of the sea to Chakra-tirtha from Swargadvar. The jalakeli of Krsna, He described how it is. Also at Chatak Parvat - there is no end to His Lila. When His body was transformed like a pumpkin, then also He described a Lila, but the nature of that description was not any book-produced thing. It cannot be taken into black and white. It is such a thing. So we receive caution often, that: "Don't try. It will come automatically. Go on with the program that is given by the Sastra and the Guru and it will be. If you have such possibility of fortune then it will come to you. It is not a natural experience that can be given to this and that. It is not to be tackled in such way."

*yatha yatha gaura-padaravinde*

Engage your full attention in Gaura-lila and that will come automatically within you. From the indirect way it will come to you from the higher domain. When it will be pleased it will come down for some time to give you experience, and you will simply be astonished, "What is this!" Then even when gone, withdrawn, you will have nothing to lament. It is a living thing. Try to come to get the whole. We cannot make it our object. Such higher thing! Such higher thing. Even it is very hard to see an ordinary man's conduct with his intimate friends, and so it is with the Lila of the Supreme Lord. How can we dare to enter into that, and especially publicly? It is not possible. Externally we can try to give some description of the outer possibilities, but not the actual thing. We won't venture to enter there.

**Devotee:** Can they draw something general, like a lotus flower?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** A lotus flower is representing the idea of beauty, softness, and such things, and different petals representing different platforms of rasam. In such a way we can take it - beauty, softness. No mundane ideas should be drawn there - only distant similarity. But categorical difference should always be there.

### **Reading Restricted**

Even we are not allowed by our Master to read the books where They are described: Govinda-Lilamrtam, even Stava-kusumanjali, even Ujjvala-nilamani. He did not allow us to study and to discuss it. Rather, he would be very much disturbed if he heard that someone was interfering with the higher Lilas in those books. He did not like it. Dusta phala karibe arjjana - Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura gives warning that we will get only a bad result if we venture to cross the line; a bad effect will come to us. Aparadha. From the lower position, anartha, the steps are shown. Sraddha, sadhu-sanga, sravan, kirttan, then anartha-nivrtti - the undesirable things will vanish altogether. Then ruchi, then asakti, then bhava-bhakti - the sprout of real devotion. Then prema-bhakti, and sneha, mana, pranay, rag, anurag, bhav, Mahabhav.

By such steps we are to approach there. Once Prabhupada remarked, though how you will take it I do not know: one gentleman, of course he was a senior, wanted to discuss these things with Prabhupada. He laid much stress on that, and ultimately he left the association of Prabhupada and lived a secluded life. Previously he did much service to the mission, that gentleman. Prabhupada remarked, "Oh, he has two lives. He is married with Krsna and she has got a child." Such a remark was there that he was a man, but taking himself as a Gopi he wanted to culture about the life of the Gopis - the intimate connection of Krsna and the Gopis. In this way he wanted to culture intensely, but Prabhupada remarked in that way: "Oh he has turned into a lady, a Gopi, and after coming in contact with Krsna she has produced a child!" Another time the Guru Maharaja of Prabhupada - Gaura Kishor Babaji - was in a hut near the Ganges.

Another disciple of Prabhupada, leaving Prabhupada went to imitate Prabhupada's Gurudeva, Gaura Kishor Babaji, and constructed a tiny hut nearby and imitated his bhajan, Harinam and the discussion of Narottama Thakura - all these things - and observed strict vairagya in his physical life. Gaura Kishor

Babaji remarked one day that only by entering a labor room and imitating the cries of labor, a child will not come by that sound. Many important previous events are necessary, then a child will come. Only imitation will not give birth to a child. Such was his remark to that gentleman.

### **Pure Goodness**

So, there is suddha-sattva , pure goodness. You must come in connection with what is known as suddha-sattva first. Visuddha-sattva refers to the nirguna world. You must come in connection with nirguna, then only may you try to approach the subtle happenings or events there. So, we are not to simply satisfy our curiosity. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread. With this spirit we must approach the whole thing. At the same time we may not be, by God's grace, a disbeliever by considering, "I shall judge the whole thing to the last details, then I shall accept what you say."

### **Charm Enough**

There are many things below, but the charm and reasonableness of the higher plane is enough to convince a person to come this side, and these high Lilas should be left high above your head. Very cautiously we are to handle all this Lila, especially Madhurya-lila. Just the other day I was thinking, about a year after joining the Mission, Prabhupada arranged for the full Karttik month to preach in Vrndavan. He asked the Maharaja, Bharati Maharaja at that time, to explain the Seventh Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam - the story of Prahlada, not the story of Krsna, Radha-Krsna. Yashoda or anything of Vrndavan, but, "Preach the Suddha-bhakti of Prahlada first. They are all ripe in sahajiyaism. Just try to make them understand that. 'Enter into the plane of Bhakti; what to speak of Krsna-lila - that is far, far above.'"

So, in Vrndavan the people rather wondered, "What is this? They are explaining Bhagavatam , but instead of the Tenth Canto they are explaining the Seventh Canto, the Prahlad-lila, the lower portion of Bhakti. That is wonderful and strange." Again, I found later on that Srila Prabhupada himself gave a lecture between Radha Kunda and Syama Kunda. There is a boundary line between the two. There, he read and explained the Upadesamrtam of Srila Rupa Goswami for a few days. He did not explain anything about Srimati Radharani, nor about

Krsna, but he spoke on Upadesamrtam - the basis. His attention was always towards the basis. The fruit will come of itself: "Pour water onto the root; pour water onto the root, and the fruit will appear itself." He himself explained this while sitting in the middle between Radha Kunda and Syama Kunda. He explained not only Bhagavatam, but Upadesamrtam. Upadesamrtam is the substance of Mahaprabhu, in the language of Rupa Goswami.

*vacho vegam manasah krodha-vegam  
jihva-vegam udaropastha-vegam  
etan vegan yo visaheta dhira  
sarvvam apimam prthivim sa sisyat*

And the last sloka:

*krsnasyochchaih pranaya-vasatih preyasibhyo 'pi  
radha- kunda casya munibhir abhitas tadrg eva  
vyadhai yat presthair apy alam asulabham kim punar  
bhakti-bhajam tat premedam sakrd api sarah snatur aviskaroti*

These topics were explained by Srila Prabhupada, but nothing of the Govinda-Lilamrtam or Srila Visvanatha-Chakravartti Thakura's Sri Krsna-Bhavanamrta - all these things were left untouched. So, our training was in this line. Pujala raga-patha gaurava-bhange , that is always upon our head, that the prospect of our life's future, life after life, cannot be finished. We shall rather foster the hope, the pure hope that we may be taken in one day in the camp. With this idea....

*Devotee:* Sometimes in Sri Chaitanya charitamrta , Srila Krsna Das Kaviraj Goswami refers to Govinda-Lilamrtam, Ujjvala-nilamani and other such confidential selected works. How are we to take that?

*Srila Sridhar Maharaja:* There are three chapters of Sri Chaitanya-charitamrta that we were generally not allowed to enter into, including the discussions with Ramananda Ray, to a certain extent. Where the Lila portion of Radha-Govinda is mentioned - we had no entrance into that Lila. Of course when parayan (chanting of the whole book within a fixed time) is going on, we go on reading, but not to enter into details of discussion about that. At that part we went on reading but without giving any particular attention to the Lila of highest order of Raga. That was barred: "Don't try to come into details there. That will come automatically when the time will be. Do not make it a discussion of the public.

Don't take it in the public. Don't take it in the public eye." So much so, that the following incident happened in Vrndavan. Prabhupada had a friend there from his childhood, an attorney, who came to see him, so Prabhupada went to give a return visit to this friend from his boyhood. Sripad Paramahansa Maharaja was with Prabhupada and they went to give the return visit. They were told, "He is upstairs." They went there and saw that a Goswami was explaining the Rasa-lila section of Srimad-Bhagavatam . Prabhupada just bowed down his head and came away. Immediately he came away.

Then his friend also came down, leaving that Rasa-lila discussion, and said, "Yes, the Rasa-lila explanation is going on, but you did not take your seat at all. You just bowed down your head and came down. What is the matter?" Srila Prabhupada replied, "Our Guru's order is such that, "If you attend Rasa-lila explanation you will commit offense." That will be offense to attend Rasa-lila explanation, so I cannot stand there even for a second. I had to come back. This is my Guru's order. To attend Rasa-lila explanation is aparadha."

### **Gurudeva's Will**

So, for us, such strict behavior he has shown. And we also do that, especially myself. At so many other places they show the Rasa-lila with dolls, but I never do that. Following what is true to my understanding of my Gurudeva's will and his words, I do not make any show of Jhulana-lila or Rasa-lila or anything of the type. I find in my heart that this is not desirable to my Guru Maharaja. But in so many Maths I see at present, I hear also, that they are doing that, but I strictly abstain from that sort of showing. The Jhulana-lila, the Rasa-lila - that is too high for us, I consider.

I must be true to my hearing of the words of my Gurudeva if I want my realization and not any position of some sort of popularity - to attract people by such a show, and to make money, or to make favorable field for preaching. They may do like that, but I do not. I do not want popularity nor any position of a higher Acharya. I am a student. Still I am a student. I consider myself to be a student. A faithful student. What I heard from my Gurudeva, I try my best to stick there, to keep my position there as I heard from him. I do not want to mutilate that in any way to suit my purpose. I try not to do that. Of course for big propaganda they may take different ways as they think. They are now free. But I

cannot participate in such things.

### **Reckoned Sincere**

When Prabhupada offered me to go to the West, I replied simply that I did not consider myself fit to go the West, saying, "I will not be able to show success there." I mentioned two defects. Then some of the sanyasins showed much reverence to me, "What is this? So many persons wish this opportunity. You are prepared to lose this chance? You neglect to take advantage of such a position, that you will be a world preacher. Do you have no hankering for that?" I replied, "Yes, Maharaja, I have no hankering to have such a position. my only humble ambition is that I may be reckoned as a sincere devotee of Mahaprabhu, Sri Chaitanyadeva. No other ambition I have in my mind such as to become a world preacher and so on."

### **Crave For Mercy**

In my nature I am such. I want truth, and I hope and crave for the mercy of the Vaisnavas and you all that I may not have that ambition, but to be the humblest, the most humble servant of the Lord, that I may not be misguided. I may engage myself in the lower form of service. Tad dasa-dasa-dasanam dasatvam dehi me prabho. My faith may be so firm and may be of such quality that the least offer of His Divine Service may satisfy me. I may not be ambitious to run high, to get the chance there in the higher officer class. In my lowest connection with the Divinity I may go on, satisfied with my life. Mahaprabhu says, "Just consider Me a speck of dust at Your feet, Oh Krsna."

*ayi nanda-tanuja kinkaram  
patitam mama visame bhavambudhau  
krpaya tava pada-pankaja-  
sthita-dhuli-sadrsam vichintaya*

"O Nandanandana, son of King Nanda, although I am Your eternal servitor, I have fallen into the terrible ocean of material existence due to the fructification of my own deeds ( karma) . Please graciously consider me to be a particle of dust at Your lotus feet." That may be our guidance. "Consider me to be one of

the specks of dust that are at Your feet." That is too much?! No, our faith should come to such a grade of quality that we may be satisfied to become a speck of dust at His feet. Then by His sweet will, anything may happen. But our humble aim should be to have even the least connection of the Divinity, the reality, and not a concocted Krsna. *pujala raga-patha gaurava-bhange* Very sweet. The *raga-patha* is on the head. We are servants of the *raga-patha*. We are in *viddhi-marga*, under *sastric* rule. We must live and move under *sastric* rule, and always keep the *raga-patha* upon our head.

### **Greatly Perturbed**

Once an incident happened while our Srila Prabhupada was at Radha Kunda. A panda in his talk made a side remark that, "We are Brahmins in Vraja. We can bless Raghunath Das Goswami." Prabhupada was perturbed by such a haughty remark, "Das Goswami is the highest Acharya in our camp, in the Gaudiya Camp. And that fellow he says that he is able to bless Das Goswami, and I am to hear that?" He stopped taking food, and remarked, "If I was an ordinary babaji I would not care. I would leave the place. But I am traveling here in a motor car, as an Acharya. I have the responsibility. I am moving here in the pose of an Acharya that I shall protect the Sampradaya. I shall brush the dusts of undesirability from the Sampradaya. How can I tolerate such a remark against my Guru?" He left his food: "Until any pratikar (opposition or remedy) is given by me, I won't take any food. I cannot take any food."

### **This Is Reality**

I think I did something to give vent to the feeling of my Gurudeva today. I did something today to clarify his position. *Pujala raga-patha gaurava-bhange* - this is enough. *Tad dasa-dasa-dasanam dasatvam dehi me prabho ...* This is not a figurative thing, this is not mere poetry, Mahaprabhu says:

*naham vipro na cha nara-patir napi vaisyo na sudro  
naham varni na cha grha-patir no vana-stho yatir va  
kintu prodyan-nikhila-parama- nanda-purnamrtabdher  
gopi-bharttuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah*

"I am not a priest, a king, a merchant, or a laborer (brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra); nor am I a student, a householder, a retired householder, or a mendicant

(brahmachari, grhastha, vanaprastha, sannyasi). I identify myself only as the servant of the servant - of the servant of the lotus feet of Sri Krsna, the Lord of the Gopis, who is the personification of the fully expanded (eternally self-revealing) nectarean ocean that brims with the totality of Divine Ecstasy." This is not only an ornamental thing. It is reality. This is reality. To actually feel ourselves to be mean is really to become eligible for the higher service. So much selflessness, so much self-abnegation is necessary for a unit here of the lowest order to enter into that domain. So much self-abnegation is necessary, then we can come into that plane. There is a plane of undercurrent, and if we really want to contact that, we shall have to develop such finest of the fine sentiment in us, and with no demand. In this negative way we are to transform ourselves, then we can have a touch of the approach to that plane. The least tinge of exploiting, any speck of the ambitious life, will not take us there. That is another thing. Pratistha is self-establishing, to be stable, to be immortal, to be invincible - it is not self-giving, but it is the self-establishing tendency: "I must stay. I must live." But if necessary, I must die for the interest of Krsna.

*marobi rakhobi - yo ichchha tohara  
nitya-dasa prati tuwa adhikara*

"Slay me or protect me as You wish, for You are the master of Your eternal servant." A suicidal soldier! For the cause of the country, if necessary I must die. I must efface myself. I may be effaced. If it is necessary my very existence may be effaced for the satisfaction of Krsna. "My very existence may be effaced if it is necessary." Such temperament, such selflessness of such degree is necessary to find out that plane. So much subtleness. Let us be blessed by Prabhupada Srila Saraswati Thakura. All glory to Guru and Gauranga. All glory to Guru and Gauranga.

### **Seeing the Treasury**

(To the devotees gathered there:) You are helping me to take out from my inner heart so many beautiful and so many valuable things. It is through your help that these old memories are coming again fresh to me. I am forced to take out those things of the inner nature of my previous life which I got from my Gurudeva as

wealth. Again I have the chance of seeing that treasury. I am given the opportunity by this recapitulation of what I heard at the divine feet of Gurudeva. This is our education, what I got from the divine feet of Gurudeva. I just sincerely put it to you all. It is such.

*pujala raga-patha gaurava-bhange*

He instructed that we must not go to live in Radha Kunda. One day - near Lalita Kunda, the Swananda Sukhada Kunja is there, and there is a single-story building - he said, "A second story is necessary, but I will not be able to live there." I asked, "If you will not live on the first floor, who will live there? What is the necessity of further construction?" "No. You don't know. Better persons will live there: Bhaktivinode Thakura, Gaura Kishor Babaji Maharaja. They will live there, and we shall stay on the ground floor and we shall serve them." Again he said, "I shall live in Govarddhan. Radha Kunda is the highest place: the place of our Guru Maharaja, our Gurudevas. They will live here in closer connection with Lila, but we are not fit to live there. We shall live in Govarddhan, just a little far away. Because we shall have to come and serve our Gurudeva, we must be near, but we must not live in closer connection with them. We are not fit."

*pujala raga-patha gaurava-bhange*

The whole tenor of his life was such: "That is high, high. And from below we are to honor that." We are to establish in the whole world this sort of posing: the proper regard of that higher Lila: "That is too high." One day in Allahabad - perhaps it was that very year Sripad Swami Maharaja (Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja) was initiated - while speaking in a park Srila Prabhupada said, "I am out to give a challenge to fight with any person to show that the highest position is occupied by my Gurudeva, by Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura and by Mahaprabhu. Let anyone come to fight with me to decide. I am ready. I am ready to give that challenge to anyone and everyone. Let them come to fight with me. I am ready to establish the throne in the highest place - my Gurudeva."

*pujala raga-patha gaurava-bhange*

Guru Maharaja, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura, preached exclusively

this Madhura-rasa, but with great precaution. What is not that thing, he used perhaps 90% of his energy to point out the negative side - "This is not Madhura-rasa" - and clear away the negative side. He had to spend, in his words, 'gallons of blood' to establish what that Madhura-rasa is not.

**From any position you may come, join Me**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Service means to come into, and to remain in connection with, the suggestion from the upper level, the advice of the Vaisnava, not any amount of activity on the physical plane. Still, activity is necessary sometimes, otherwise in solitary life the memory of so many past incidents come to prey on us, to disturb us.

So, *sadhu-sangha* is always recommended, and on that basis our bhajan life shall go on. That is a safe and fruitful foundation for us. Krsna gives His assurance:

*sarva-dharman parityaja  
mam ekam saranam vraja  
aham tvam sarva papebhyo  
moksayisyami ma sucah*  
(Bhagavadgita 18:66)

“Just abandon all varieties of religion and surrender exclusively unto Me. I shall protect you from all sinful reactions; do not fear.”

He says, “All the debts you have ever incurred, I shall pay off; there will be nothing for you to worry for, to lament. From any position you may come, join Me, and I shall take the full responsibility because you are My devotee.”

When Srila Swami Maharaj Prabhupada returned from America to India with his first group of disciples, he made them stay in a house somewhere in Vrindavan. Near that place was the ashram of one influential person, a Goswami. One of Srila Swami Maharaj’s disciples was seduced by that gentleman, by his teachings, and he left his godbrother group and went to stay with him. Later on,

realising his mistake, the disciple came back to Srila Swami Maharaj, and prayed before him: “I have committed a mistake. I have come back; please accept me.” Srila Swami Maharaj told him: “Yes, I forgive you. You are my boy, you have committed some mistake; I forgive, I accept you. Do not worry; now go on, continue with your duties...”

And Krsna says, “You are Mine, I forgive you. Because you are Mine, you have got the right to demand everything from Me! By My own law, I am bound to do anything and everything for you because I am your Owner. You belong to Me, so when you come to Me, to My shelter, I take the whole charge, for your past, present, future, everything it is Mine. It is My responsibility, I take the risk for that. That you did something wrong, it may be, but you did not know anything what is right or wrong, you could not understand. I forgive you...” With this spirit, Krsna is appealing: *moksayisyami ma sucah* “You won’t have to lament; I take the whole burden for your past actions.” Such is the nature of the Infinite Truth: all-accomodating, all-sympathetic, all-embracing, all-fulfilling.

There is an incident which occurred during the reign of the Moghul Emperor Akhbar, in India. Though Mohammedan by creed, Akhbar was very generous, very kind to all religious conceptions. Once there was an exhibition in which were shown deities of all the Hindu gods. While visiting that exhibition, Akhbar was proceeding around the hall, inspecting all the representations there, and asking the exhibitors: “Who is this god? What are his activities, his pastimes? Where did he descend on earth?” and so on. At one point he came before the figure of Krsna, depicted in Vrindavan, playing His flute. After seeing everything in the hall, he remarked to the exhibitors, indicating the figure of Krsna: “Amongst your gods, this god is the highest of all because, He is not having the worry of any management, He is completely free, enjoying His life, playing the flute, with no worry about anything. The highest conception of your God is here He has no cares, no troubles, nothing of the kind. To get His company, to enter into His company, will be very beneficial!”

This is the nature of Krsna-lila; it is playful. To be engaged in play to play, without anxiety that is the highest lila. Krsna shows His pastimes here in this world, in bhauma Vrindavan, prapanca Vrindavan, like an exhibition to test our taste, to give a chance, an opportunity for our taste: “Do you want this?” In that divine exhibition, so many things are shown, for our choice. The different lilas of the Lord in His various Infinite Forms and Pastimes come here, into the world, to test our choice: “Do you want this? Or, this?” Such opportunity is

offered.

Once one vairagi came here, to the Math; she was an old woman wearing red cloth, a follower of Siva-Sakti. I asked her, “What do you want, after death? Do you want Kali, do you want her association? Do you want to be her maidservant? Or, do you want to be with Siva, with his group his friends, or his servants, like Nandi and Brngi? Do you want to become one of them? Do you want to become four-handed, like the servitors of Narayana? Or, do you want to become a gopi, or a cow-boy, wandering in Vrindavan with Krsna, or with Nanda, Yasoda? What do you want?”

Hearing this, she answered: “Yes, if it could be so, if such a beautiful life were possible, then I really want to be in Vrindavan. That I like best, and not to be in Vaikuntha, nor to be one of the friends or servants of Siva; nor one of the she-maids of Kali, who are chewing on the severed hands of her victims, and drinking their blood, so many horrible things.”

Then I told her, “If after death the possibility of such a simple, peaceful, beautiful life in Vrindavan really exists, then why do you follow your present path? You just see the ultimate position, and consider what is suitable for you.”

So, the exhibition of Krsna’s pastimes comes to take place here, and to test our choice the chance is given to us: “What do you want, really? What appeals to your innermost heart? See where your taste is, and accordingly come forward, for your future attainment.”

Of all the pastimes of Krsna, the highest are in the human form:

*krsnera yateka khela sarvottama nara-lila  
nara-vapu tahara svarupa  
gope-vesa, venu-kara nava kisora, nata-vara  
nara lilara haya anurupa  
(Caitanya Charitamrita. Madhya 21:101)*

“Lord Krsna has many pastimes, of which His pastimes as a human being are the best. His form as a human being is the Supreme Transcendental Form. In this form, He is a cowherd boy. He carries a flute in His hand, and His youth is just beginning. He is also an expert dancer. All this is just suitable for His pastimes as a human being.”

Correspondingly, the human form in this world is the best for attainment of the service of Krsna in the divine realm. It is for this reason that it is so valuable. The poet Candidas says:

“O brother, please listen: this human form is above all,  
There is nothing above it! I appeal to you all,  
Members of the human race: from my heart  
I am giving this advice, born of my experience—  
Your human form, its pastimes, its movement,  
Are the crown in nature’s hall.”

But the supreme value of human life is misrepresented in a mundane way by those such as the Ramakrishnite sect; they say that to ‘serve God’ means only to serve man and his needs in this world. Their claim is: “The human being is above all, Candidas has said so. Therefore, serving man is serving God. We should only serve the fallen souls, the human race, through so many welfare works.”

But the real value of the human life is clarified by the scriptures. They advise us: “Utilise this human form to attain the divine plane of Krsna’s pastimes. It is very suitable for that, human life is very suitable to reach that highest plane— it is very similar in many aspects. The human birth is rarely attained, and if you avoid this chance to approach the divine realm through it, you commit suicide. It is not a small mistake you are committing, it is the greatest mistake if you lose this chance it amounts to suicide, not less than that.

So, try for that highest plane. If you lose this birth, there is no guarantee that again you will get a human birth you may have to go to visit other species. Remember the case of Bharat Maharaj! At the time of his death, he had some intense attention for a deer-cub, to whom he had given shelter after it became separated from its mother. He was lamenting, “O, who will look after this one, so young?”; and in his next birth he himself became a deer. Such a horrible thing: that impression of the young deer caught him, and it took such a shape. Such a dangerous position you are all in. So always try, strive for the higher plane.”

The English poet Longfellow has written:

“Trust no future howe’er pleasant!  
Let the dead past bury its dead!

Act— act, in the living present!  
Heart within, and God o’erhead!”

And this is the advice of the scriptures: “What the future holds, you do not know. So, don’t rely on any future: take the whole responsibility in the present to approach the divine realm and make your human life a success.”

## **Fulfillment Is In Love**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Mahaprabhu took shelter in the plane of *jnana-sunya-bhakti*. There our guardians will take care of us wholesale. To live under His guardianship is the best position for so many tiny souls. Give the responsibility of your own charge to the highest guardian. That is the most peaceful life, according to *jnana-sunya-bhakti* – surrender to such extremity, to such extent as forgetfulness of everything in the grace of the Almighty. To live there, in the automatic section of the world is the highest goal for living entities like us. Don’t take any responsibility.

There are different forms also. Mahaprabhu said to Ramananda “age kaho ara – go further.” *Dasya*, *sakhya*, *vatsalya*, *madhurya*, *svakijya*, *parakiya* – there is gradation. But the plane is all together, *jnana-sunya*, self-forgetfulness, the plane of self-forgetfulness, not just sacrifice. The Christian missionaries also say that: “Sacrifice is seen in the life of Socrates, but Christ’s recommendation, the plane of self-forgetfulness is higher than that.” Self-forgetfulness is higher than self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice is the beginning, and then in a higher stage, self-forgetfulness. But that does not mean no sentient activity. In that plane also, fully conscious of their interest; different parties, competition, everything is there, but the background is such. And it is difficult to understand that background. Whatever we find here is there; but it is of the opposite type, and the original is the ideal type.

Keen competition is also there in that plane, but the foundation is self-forgetfulness. The peculiar thing is that Centre consciousness, and here

selfishness of the plurality is the difference.

*kama andha tama prema nirmal bhaskar  
deko bhai kama preme vede naitabhu kama preme nahi hoy*

Similar but opposite, that is to be understood. This is difficult – aprakrta. Prakrta just like this mundane plane, but it is not so, don't mistake it. It is difficult. Everything appears like this mundane world, but it is all faithful to the Centre to the highest degree. Everything is done for the satisfaction of the Centre. And here everything is done for the satisfaction of so many meagre parts, local interest. Local interest, and universal interest; that is the distinction. You must put food into the stomach, not into the ear, or the eye, or anywhere else. It is sheer foolishness, to put food into the eye or ear for their nourishment; but to put food into the stomach is the highest intelligence.

*pranopaharac ca yatendriyanam  
tathaiva sarvarhanam acyutejya*

Yasmin jnate sarvam idam “To know the Centre, and to do.” So, our Guru Maharaj said, “Religion is proper adjustment.” Adjustment with the whole, with the Centre, particularly. Proper adjustment, and keen competition is not eliminated in the adjustment. Adjustment does not mean a harmonious static condition, but this is dynamic to the fullest extent – still, it is harmonious. Harmony is not a static thing. Like a machine, when it is working, it is in harmony. The harmony has its test when the machine is working. When static, it is undetectable whether it is harmonious or not. But when in the dynamic condition, the harmony has its test. What is harmony? Movement, but no collision. Without collision, free movement of every part – that is harmony.

If not manipulated by intelligence, guided by intelligence, energy has no meaning. Guidance is necessary. Also guidance, or intelligence has no meaning if it does not connect with fulfilment, or satisfaction, or happiness, or sweetness, prema, love. Everything is meaningless if that aspect is eliminated from life. Fulfilment is in love, in beauty, in sweetness, in charm – sat cit anandam. Ananda, fulfilment, guidance next, then energy third: karma-jnana-bhakti. Without bhakti, the conclusion of everything is useless; no purpose is served. Bhakti is fulfilment, devotion, and devotion means acceptance of a higher entity. Bhagavan means bhajaniya sarva sad guna visista.

Jiva Goswami gives this explanation of the word bhagavan. Another plane of life is opened. When we come in His connection, our heart wants to worship Him, to serve Him. He is of such qualification. You want to surrender, sacrifice, give yourself for the satisfaction of that thing – He is bhagavan. The third plane of life is open when we come in connection with the conception of bhagavan. Bhajaniya guna visista. He has got such qualities that automatically our aspiration will be to surrender, and to serve Him. We find a new plane of life.

We want that everything will serve us. That is the general tendency here. But if we come in connection with the conception of bhagavan, then at once the thing will be opposite: “I must serve Him.” From the core of the heart, such a wave will come: “He wants service? He should be served, by all means.” That plane will come in the heart. Bhagavan, bhajaniya guna visista.

Not self-aggrandizement, or survival of the fittest, tendency of elevation, all these disappear; and even the conception of complete retirement, that is also eliminated: “I shall enjoy retired life,” mukti, renunciation, a retired life of peace. Peace means retirement from a life of labour. But no, again some tendency awakens: “I must serve. I want a life to serve. I have come in connection with such a beautiful and noble conception, heavenly conception of the heart. Heart, such a heart I have noticed there. I cannot but give my heart to that.” Bhagavan.

And svayam bhagavan, what to speak of Him? Madly, everyone is mad to serve, to render Him service; that is the stage of svayam-bhagavan. Uddhava was astonished to find that. “We have some experience of surrendering, and serving the master; but such mad tendency to serve the master as I find in Vrndavan amongst the gopis, we can never imagine, we can never imagine in our life.” So, svayam-bhagavan, they have come in connection with svayam-bhagavan.

Bhagavan “as it is”, independent of the spectators. Swami Maharaj (A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj) wrote, Gita “As It Is.” Not modified by the different interpretations, or onlookers of different meanings, but “As It Is”. So, bhagavan as He is, free from the relative conceptions of so many, He is such. One who comes in connection with that, he becomes mad to serve. Self-forgetfulness means to completely merge; that is a class of merging. The muktikamis, the Salvationists, they speak of this physical merging, but real, living merging is there, life maintained but still merging. Visate tat anantaram

*marttyo yada tyaktva-samasta-karma niveditatman vicikirsito me  
tad amrtatvam pratipadyamano mayatma-bhuyaya ca kalpate vai*

That is not this physical, material merging in the dynamic characteristic of the Lord, not static merging. And they also merge, brahma-bhuyaya kalpate, they enter into the family life of the Lord. There is that sort of merging, in a dynamic system. To merge in a dynamic system, not in a static substance.

*yadi gur na ha 'ta tabe ki haita kemane dharitam de*

“If Gauranga did not come with all these astonishing findings, then how could we live?” Vasudeva data says, “How could we live? The very vitality of our life He has taken out to us. The innermost vitality, that we are so great, so loving, so noble, if He did not come then who have shown to us our own nobility, that such a noble self is within us, such a dignified self is within us. We are so big, so great.”

Our Guru Maharaj at Dacca University, he gave as the heading of a lecture, “Gaudiya Math stands for the dignity of the human race, not slavery,” You fool, you think it is slavery, “Gaudiya Math preaches slavery.” It is not slavery as you understand it, but “the dignity of the human race.” That human soul, any soul, how from above he can get his chance, and he can rise up. Such prospect a jiva has, the adoration of the Almighty, of svayam-bhagavan.

As you give, so you have. So much giving, and so much having is also there. You think that svayam-bhagavan, God as He is, is bankrupt, that He is only gathering loans from different parties, but it is not so. Uddhava was astounded. Vasudeva data says, “Sri Gauranga has taken for us such a proud, wealthy, and noble self, our ideal position. Then how could we live if we could not come to know our much dignified position? Without doing that, that is a life of death. Without proper knowledge of one’s own self, one’s own wealth, one’s own noble self, that is a sort of life in death. He has given us our life.” Otherwise we could not have lived without knowing that we are so noble. Gauranga has come with these tidings for us. Now we realise that without that, we could not live. We have such a wonderful degree of fortune. And Gauranga is saying: “You Vasudeva, you people, you devotees, you do not know how great you are.” With these tidings He has come to our door.

And Nityananda Prabhu travelled from one door to another: “Accept Gauranga.

You do not know what fortune is going, by you, on the road by your gate, ‘Don’t eliminate it.’ My friend, don’t eliminate it.’ Try to get it and your joy, your fortune, will know no bounds. Don’t avoid Gauranga.” Nityananda Prabhu carried this news from door to door. “Don’t avoid Gauranga. You know not what treasure He has taken for you. My friend, accept Him, take Him in, give yourself to Him. And you cannot estimate what fortune you will derive. Accept Him. Please accept Him.” This was the message of Nityananda, door to door.

He has an inner appreciation for this favourable breeze. Along the two sides of the Ganges river, Nityananda Prabhu appealed to all the villagers and inhabitants with the utmost earnestness. “Accept Gauranga! Accept Gauranga!”

*bhaja gauranga, kaha gauranga, laha gauranger nama  
je jana gauranga bhaje sei amara prana*

“Accept Gauranga, and you will become the heart of my heart.”

This is the place (the math in Nabadwip). The most magnanimous expression came out here in Kuliya, when Gauranga absolved so many vaisanva-aparadhis, so many persons that had committed offenses against the Vaisnavas. Here in Kuliya and in Goverdhana we find Aparadha-bhanjan-pat. Aparadha, the greatest crime, was pardoned here, was forgiven here. So, I have selected this place for my temple. All the serious, grave offences will be forgiven here.

Goverdhana, Giriraja-Govardhana is a very favourite, selected abode of our Guru Maharaj. Radha-kuna is the highest, but there our guru, our senior, superior guides will stay, and we shall stay a little far off. We cannot encroach upon that highest position. From here we shall go and serve them and return. That is Govardhana.

In his last days our Guru Maharaj liked very much to hear this poem of Das Goswami and Rupa Goswami, nija niketa nivasam dehi goverdhana tam. And that is the meaning. Radha-kunda is the highest, but, pujala ragapata gauraba bange, giving respect to the highest position, to the superiors, we shall come down a little. So our pride will be a little checked and we can be in a normal position. I am not in the highest position, but a little lower, trying to climb higher. I am Vaisnava dasa, not Vaisnav. That is a very advantageous and intelligent position to be taken: “I am not a Vaisnava, I am Vasnava das.” The progress – kisorā. That is the best position, only progressing, not fully attained, only going to get the full attainment. That position is good. Nija niketa nivasam

dehi goverdhana tam.

Swami Maharaj mentioned in his diary, or somewhere else, that once, during the circumambulation of Braja-mandala, in Koshi, Prabhupad (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur) said: “This evening I shall give a class,” but many of the sannyasis went away to see the Sesa-sayi, and only a few remained to hear him. I heard from someone that Swami Maharaj mentioned that he stayed, I also stayed to hear Prabhupada, rather than go to some other place, and have darshan of Sesa-sayi.

Prabhupad himself said: “This evening I shall give the class.” But some remained and some left, because the next day we had to start in some other direction, and so that darshan was avoided. That other place was also an important place, where Laksmi Devi is serving Narayana – Sesa-sayi Narayana. When the Gopis went to see that place, they felt the highest degree of separation there.

*yat te sujata caranamburuham stanesu  
bhitah sanaih priya dadhimahi karkasesu  
tenatavimatasi tad vathate na kim svit  
kurpadibhir bhramati dhirbhavad asusam nah*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.31.19)

There we heard from Prabhupad, a new meaning of Govardhana. He said that, “Just as the breeding of the cow section does not care for any social rules, so also the devotees of Krishna, they do not care for any social rules, but go on extending their group. Neither Brahmin, vaisya, sudra, ksatriya, chandala, mlechha, they do not care. Without caring for the social rules, they go on increasing their own group, their own section. Krsna-bhakti, Krsna conception, without caring for any state or environment they can try to continue to extend the ghought of devotion, anywhere and everywhere, without caring for the yogyata, the capacity of the disciples.

*akrstih krta-cetasam sumanasamuccatam camhasam  
acandalamamukalokasulabho yasyas ca muktisriyah  
no disam na ca satkriyam na ca puruscaryam managiksate  
mantro ‘yam rasanasprg eva phalati sri krsnanamatmakah*  
(Chaitanya-charitamrta Madhya 15. 110)

The mantra, the sound of the name of Sri Krsna is so powerful, that it does not

care for any capacity of the soil: it may be thrown down anywhere and it will sprout up, it is such a powerful seed. Akrstih krta-cetasam sumanasamuccatam camhasam. Only those that have some sort of previous sukrti are attracted and captured by this Krsna conception, the mantra of Krsna. When within the mantra the subject matter is Krsna, that only can attract a particular group.

As Achyatananda said to the local headmaster, when that head-master said: “We are so near, yet we cannot understand Mahaprabhu, but you have come, attracted from far away under the banner of Mahaprabhu. What is the cause?” Brahmanda brahmite kona bhagyavan jiva,” he answered. It is not a question of the locality, but in the whole of the brahmanda (universe) that peculiar qualification may be seen – krta-ceta. Those who have some sukrti, some sadhu-sanga in any form, only they are attracted from all sections. Only a select few are attracted.

And very easily the Krsna mantra can drive away sinful tendencies, very easily brush them away.

## **Fulfillment of our existence**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Generally, if all our activity is stopped by unfavourable weather, we think, “This is very bad.” We are men of action, men who exploit the environment and nature for gathering some energy. We are always trying to collect some energy for our use. That is our nature. The very nature of those who live in this mortal world is to collect more and more energy and wealth that can be utilized in a time of need.

If there is any hindrance to that end, we think it is a very bad circumstance, in opposition to the object of our life. But to remind us about the importance of our inner wealth, we are advised that the outer nature cannot do us so much harm as can our internal nature – that is, our apathy to collect more wealth for the inner existence, the inner self. Be mindful of that.

Losing things of this mortal world is not bad; it is all coming and going. The

body itself, the centre of all this activity, will also vanish. Then what is the necessity of collecting so much energy for the bodily connection? So, awaken your consciousness. Find the real person within – the soul. Search him out and try to help him. That is possible only with help from the sadhu.

The day in which we do not find any saint or have any discussion about the real purpose of life – the inner life, the inner substance – that day we are the loser. Be conscious of that. In all respects, in any way possible, mind your own lesson – mind your own interest.

Find your own self-interest. Be unmindful towards the external world and circumstances dive deep into reality, the inner world. Find your inner self, the inner world where you really live where your inner self is living. Try to find your Home, go back to God, back to Home. Your energy must be utilized for going Home not for wandering in this land of death.

Try to avoid the land of death at any cost. Always try to find the eternal soil, that soil to which you belong. Try to understand what is your home, why it is your home. Home comfort – what does it mean? It means our birthplace, the place where you are born.

In Srimad Bhagavatam we find this verse:

*satam prasangan mama virya-samvido  
bhavanti hrt-karna-rasayanah kathah  
taj-josanad asv apavarga-varmani  
sraddha ratir bhaktir anukramisyati  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.25)*

“In the association of pure devotees, discussions about Me are very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. Such talks, which are full of spiritual potency, are a source of sweetness, and by such cultivation, the path of liberation from worldly life quickly opens. Then gradually one attains firm faith which, in due course, develops into taste and then real love for Me.”

This was spoken by the incarnation of the Lord, Sri Kapiladeva, to His mother. Devahuti, in response to her inquiry as to what is the real goal of life and how to attain it. It came about in this way. Devahuti was married to the sage, Kardama Rsi. After passing some years in the enjoyment of married life, Devahuti conceived a child in her womb from the Rsi. In Bhagavad-gita the Lord says:

prajanas casmi kandarpah. “Of Cupids I am He who ensures progeny.” And elsewhere, it is said, prayanaya na rataye, married life is not meant for enjoyment, but for the purpose of producing good progeny.

When the objective of their marriage was achieved, the Rsi proposed that he retire from married life. He told Devahuti, “You have a child in your womb and it is not an ordinary child – the Lord Himself is coming. So, I am going to live alone for my own higher purpose of life.”

Then, Devahuti said, “I have such a good partner. I am fortunate to have a saint like you as my husband, but I did not take proper advantage of your noble personality to learn anything about Brahman, about the Lord, about my inner life’s necessity and its fulfillment. I did not inquire about that. I was only busy to serve you, to satisfy your desires. Though I had such a noble companion, I did not utilize my fortune. Now I pray that you may stay for some time and teach me, help me in spiritual life and then you may go.”

Kardama Rsi replied, “You will get help from your son. It is the Lord Himself who is coming – not an ordinary child. Remember this, and in time you will receive that spiritual help from Him. So I won’t stay: I shall go now.” He departed. Soon, the child appeared and Devahuti raised that child alone. Because of her great motherly affection as her son grew, she gradually forgot what her husband had revealed – that He was not an ordinary child.

In course of time, when the boy had grown and was one day absorbed, Devahuti was reminded. “Oh, the mood of my child does not seem to be ordinary.” She could understand that He was engaged in deep thought and considered, “His father foretold that the Lord would appear through me and now I see it is true. My son’s mood does not seem to be worldly but it is from above. His mind is absorbed in transcendental thought.”

She then slowly approached Him, “Child, your father told me that You are not an ordinary boy of this world. You are Divine. I wanted some spiritual advice from him but he told me that You would advise me. For so long I did not heed that but today, Your mood is encouraging me – it is reminding me of those words of Your father and encouraging me to approach You for spiritual advice. Be pleased to advise me about what is spiritual truth. Who am I? What is this world? How can I find the proper direction of life? Who is the owner of this world and what is my duty towards Him? You are not an ordinary boy, so I want to know all these

things from You, my child.” Then from the lips of her son came this verse, given in the Srimad Bhagavatam (3.25.25):

*satam prasangan mama virya-samvido  
bhavanti hrt-karna-rasayanah kathah  
taj-josanad asv apavarga-varmani  
sraddha ratir bhaktir anukramisyati*

Lord Kapila said, satam prasangan mama virya-samvido – “Talks about Me which are full of potency can only be found coming from the lips of My devotees. Not only lip-deep words, but words that have depth, spirit, power and that represent Reality come from the lips of My real devotee. Such words are not shallow, but are surcharged with spirit, with life, and can enliven us. Bhavanti hrt-karna-rasayanah kathah – they satisfy both our ear and our heart and give a taste of spiritual joy – rasayanah. Their words are surcharged with the ecstasy of the spiritual world and colour our ear, our mind and our heart – physically, mentally and also on the plane of our soul. Taj-josanad – by hearing from the real source, from that real sadhu; asv apavarga-varmani – we are led towards relief from this worldly life. By a gradual process, we attain these things; sraddha ratir bhaktir anukramisyati: first sraddha – ever increasing faith; then rati, a slight taste; then we get real live – bhakti. Anukramisyati – by a gradual process we are taken towards the higher domain.”

In this way, the boy began to advise His mother, Devahuti. This Devahuti-nandana Kapila, was the son of Kardama Rsi, but there was another Kapila whose Sankhya philosophy does not recognize God: it only analyzes the material elements, gradually eliminating everything of spiritual substance.

So, there are two Kapilas, both of whom gave Sankhya philosophy: the Divine Son of Kardama Rsi and the other, Sankhyaka Kapila. Kapila, the son of Kardama and Devahuti, gave what is known as sankhya, but He has given recognition to the Supreme Lord, isvara. However, the atheist Kapila claimed isvara-asiddhe – there is no necessity of any God to explain the existence of this world. That is his conclusion.

The nyayikas (logicians) say that there must be One who has created this world. This world has been created so there must be someone who has done it. Their highest conclusion is that there must be a creator, and He is God, Isvara. But the atheist Kapila says, “No, there is no necessity of any God to explain the

existence of this material world – isvara-asiddhe. His finding, his conclusion is that there is no necessity of a creator; automatically everything exists. Only two things are necessary: first, a particle of spirit, and second, matter. Matter and spirit combined. Siva and Sakti, have created this world. There are so many spiritual particles, like specks of sand or dust, and by their combination with matter this world is going on automatically.

Once, while at the Madras Matha, I met a gentleman from Madhupur who was a follower of this school of thought. He was an educated Bengali gentleman and I asked him, “What have you got from your guru – that Kapila?”

He said, “So many souls are there, yata, jiva and everyone is a siva, independent of this matter.”

I said, “You are satisfied with this explanation?”

“Yes, I am satisfied: pasa baddho bhavaj jivah pasa mukta sadasivah – the soul while conditioned is jiva, and when liberated, then he is siva.”

I told him, “Where your philosophy ends, our philosophy – that of the Bhagavat School, begins.”

“How is it so?” he asked me.

“You will have to explain where these sivas exist. There are so many sivas, like particles of spiritual dust. But should we not think they must be living in some position and that there must exist some relationship between them? There are so many and some sort of relationship must be there between them and they must also stay somewhere – in some position, some plane. And how are they harmonized together, or are they each an independent unit, all fighting one another? If not, then what is their nature?”

“The Bhagavata has come to explain about the mukta-jivas, the liberated souls. These souls, who were once diseased, are now free from that disease. In their healthy condition, what do they do? What is their position, their characteristic, their nature, their objective and their pastimes? We have to know that. So, Bhagavatam has given us an explanation.”

Devarsi Narada asked Vyasadeva, “Explain what is the normal, natural condition of the liberated souls who are not diseased.” And that has been given. There is a centre and all function in connection with Him and are all harmonized together. In Srimad Bhagavad-gita (5.5), the Lord says:

*yat sankhyaih prapyate sthanam  
tad yogair api gamyate  
ekam sankhyam ca yoganca*

*yah pasyati sa pasyati*

“He has true vision who can see that the sankhya and yoga systems are one and the same.” One person is trying to reach the ultimate goal by external elimination and the other by internal elimination. “This is body, this is mind, this is atma, then paramatma, and onwards.” The search is all within. The process of elimination is within. And by that he is trying to reach the core. And the other, by elimination of the elements of the external world, he is trying to understand the origin.

That is sankhya – neti, neti, neti – “This is not it, this is not it, this is dependent, this is also dependent, this is not original, nor this, nor this. All are effects. Then what is the cause?” To inquire through the external process is sankhya, and the internal process is through yoga – yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dhyana, dharana, Samadhi. So, by elimination of the effect, we come in contact with the cause, from the gross we start towards the subtle and we reach more and more subtle planes in the causal direction.

This is the process in both sankhya and yoga. But in the beginning of Srimad Bhagavatam. Sukadeva Goswami, who is speaking to Pariksit Maharaja, begins his talk by saying that these two – sankhya and yoga – and also sva-dharma parinisthaya (fulfilling one’s Vedic duty), can all give us liberation, but there is something more:

*etavan sankhya-yogabhyam, sva-dharma-parinisthaya  
janma labhah parah pumsam, ante narayana-smrtih*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 2.1.6)

He says, etavan, so far, by these processes, we are told our liberation may be achieved: by sankhya, external elimination: by yoga, internal elimination and also by sva-dharma parinisthaya, discharging one’s duty as it is recommended in the Veda. To perform whatever is one’s respective duty as it is recommended, without any special aim or objective, is niskama. Because it has been advised by the sastra as my duty in my present position, I am doing it, but in a disinterested way, without any special end.

As a brahmana, I am told, “You must do these things,” so I am doing them. As a ksatriya, my duty is to keep the peace and control the evildoers; that is my duty and I am doing it. As a vaisya, I am advised to do such and such. Because it is

advised in the sastra, I am doing my respective duty in a disinterested way, that is without any special aim or interest. All these three processes – sankhya, yoga and Vedic duty – lead us to liberation.

But janma labhah parah pumsam, ante narayana smrtih – after we get relief from the external bondage then the fulfillment of our life is in remembering our Lord Narayana, the Creator, and our relationship with Him. We must get out of the net we are entangled in. After getting release from this entanglement, we must search out our proper relationship with the Prime Cause. Who are we in our relationship with Him? Here the Bhagavata begins (2.1.6).

*etavan sankhya-yogabhyam, sva-dharma-parinisthaya  
janma labhah parah pumsam, ante narayana-smrtih*

Janma labhah means fulfillment of our existence, our birth: labhah means the gain, the fulfillment, the end. What is that end? Ante narayana-smrtih – our connection or re-connection with the centre – that All-harmonizing Centre. That should be our goal. The Bhagavatam comes to tell us this. So many other sastras come to give us release from this external bondage; but with internal progress, after crossing the marginal plane, we get admission into the paravyoma, the special area – Vaikuntha. That is, we get visa for that land – viraja, brahmaloka, bedhi, paravyoma, paya. We catch the flow of the current going towards the centre – that is the visa. Sankhya yoga and sva-dharma parinisthaya can give us the passport to get out of the land where we are living. But after that, if we want to attain something, a visa is necessary.

### **God is teaching anti-religious principles?**

**Devotee:** Maharaj, actually that lawyer specialised in criminal law; if he read the part about Krsna stealing butter, perhaps he was attracted by that!

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj** (laughing): Then he should have concocted a case, filed a case against that devotee, that “You have come to introduce this idea, of God’s

stealing? Then, all here in this world, imitating Him, will be thieves!”

**Devotee:** He could claim, “Your God is teaching anti-religious principles, adharma !”

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** But by his own reasoning, that lawyer must also have to conclude that not God, but all here in this world, including he himself, is culprit. Because, if God is advaya-jnana, the Perfect Whole, and abhijna-svarat, the fully independent Absolute, and if He happens to be a thief, then all here who try to imitate Him in that way are envious of Him. To become jealous of His activities, they must first be thinking that they are an equal party to Him. But that is not the fact. He is Absolute- you are a culprit! And, nirmatsaranam-satam- only those who are not envious can accept this truth (Srimad Bhagavatam 1:1:3). And if God is a thief, also, we can consider that we have some hope. How is that?

When I was a college student, once I went to hear a lecture given by a gentleman, one Goswami. There he told, “Because Krsna is a thief, we have got some hope! We have erected such a good fence, such strong fencing all around us, on all sides of us, so that nothing good may enter. We have made a boundary wall, and its gates are all locked; there are so many locks there, so much opposition, that nothing can enter. But, Krsna is a thief; by stealth that thief will come, of his own interest!”

So we have tried our best to construct a boundary line all around our heart, that no God consciousness can enter, but as a thief Krsna will enter, and that is our solace: that one day, He may stealthily enter as a thief into our heart, and capture it. Only that is our hope. Consciously we won’t invite Him to come within our heart, so only the ‘thief-God’ is our solace. So, let God be thief! And when goodness comes in that way- stealthily- such mercy is above the consideration of justice.

There was one Mohammedan gentleman living in the Hooghly district of Calcutta, his name was Haji Mohammed Mahasim. He was a bachelor, and owned much property; a rich man but of very charitable disposition. In Hooghly there is a big mosque commemorated to his name. Stealthily, he used to give charity. He would move around in the poorest areas of the city at night, disguised in very plain clothes, and unseen he would throw bags of coins into the dwellings.

If money comes stealthily to someone in such a way, it is not considered undesirable. And if Kṛṣṇa comes stealthily into our heart, as a thief, how easily we may get Him! But such dealings are all above justice, in the plane of mercy. Above the plane of justice, in the land of mercy and affection and love, such things are possible. The good enters stealthily into the bad, the undesiring party, the exploiter, and makes him good.

First we must understand our present undesirable position as exploiter. The conditioned soul is the exploiter of nature; but, in actuality, he himself is being exploited by her. Matter has come to exploit us. And we have to be able to see clearly, in this interaction: what is the gain and what is the loss? Firstly we must be able to discriminate properly between matter and spirit: that there is the action, and behind it the consciousness.

Srila Swami Maharaj Prabhupada gave this example: there are two men, one has got eyes, but is crippled; the other can move, but he has no eyes, he is blind. Matter, the machine, though moving, has no feeling- it is not the real party, the conscious party; that position belongs to the man, who is endowed with feeling. In Bhagavad-gita we find:

*karya-karana-kartṛtve  
hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate  
puruṣaḥ sukha-duḥkhaṇam  
bhokṛtṛtve hetur ucyate  
(Bhagavad-gita 13:21)*

“Material nature is said to be the cause of all conditioned activities of the mundane senses, and their effects, the material body; whereas the living entity himself is the cause of his own sufferings and enjoyments in this world.” Who is the important factor- the feeler or the felt? The criterion of happiness is confined in the feeler. And we have to consider, fundamentally: is happiness necessary? And if so, why it is necessary? Happiness is possible only in the subjective existence- it is possible for the soul. And avoiding this material engagement, he may feel more happiness: he will be atmarama, self- satisfied. Presently entangled in the non-joyful substance, non-happy substance, he must seek to become self-established, atmarama. Atmarama means who is established in his own self, and not outside himself.

And even they who are atmarama, who have attained that standard, find more happiness when they come in contact with the Super-atma- with Paramatma, the

Supreme Soul. In this way, in Srimad Bhagavatam the existence of the higher atma, of the Supersoul world, is fundamentally established:

*suta uvaca*  
*atmaramas ca munayo*  
*nirgrantha apy urukrame*  
*kurvanty ahaitukim bhaktim*  
*ittham-bhuta-guno harih*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 1:7:1)

“Suta Goswami said: All the atmaramas, those who find satisfaction in the self, and especially those who are situated on the path of spiritual realisation, being already free from slavery to matter, feel the desire to serve the Supreme Person with pure devotion. The Lord, being the Possessor of all transcendental qualities, is able to attract all living beings, even those who are liberated.”

Those who are self-sufficient are also attracted by some higher kind of ecstasy. So this is the positive proof that higher ecstasy is existing. Though of so very much finer type, still it has got its real existence, because the self-sufficient people, they also find joy when coming in contact with that apparently abstract thing. And that is the proof: that a man who does not care for anything of this world, who is independent, almost independent of material existence can be drawn by that transcendental substance.

Consider Sukadev Goswami. Already self-realised from before his birth, he does not want anything in this world; even he doesn't wear any clothes. He only takes, sometimes, a cup of milk, if it comes easily. He does not care for anything in this mundane plane- this is a quite independent life. He is atmarama, engaged in himself, not in any material, objective consciousness. And he has become attracted by some high things of seemingly abstract nature. So, there must be something above the soul's own, subjective existence, in a still higher plane that is adhoksaja, beyond ordinary perception.

When that plane comes down to contact us, we can feel it, and when it withdraws, we are helpless- we cannot contact it, cannot touch it. It is similar to the phenomenon of the 'flying saucer'. You have heard of flying saucer?

**Devotee:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Recently it was reported in the newspaper: there was a

rumour that a craft of some kind- a u.f.o., unidentified flying object, or flying saucer- was coming to make contact with the earth. From here, the airforce pilots apparently sighted it, but when they tried to follow it, when they gave chase, it disappeared.

The adhoksaja plane of existence is something like that: it can come down to make contact with us, but when we chase after it, when we try to capture it, suddenly it is nowhere to be found. That is the proof, and the nature, of the higher existence. Just as with the flying saucer, the aeroplane pilots see that “something is coming down, coming towards us!”; but when they give chase, it disappears, so, a world of more efficient machinery is existing on the other side. Based on their experiences, those pilots and other aeronautical experts are now admitting some higher existence, the existence of some higher plane of life.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, Sukadev Goswami informs Maharaj Pariksit:

*prayena munayo rajan,  
nivrta vidhi-sedhatah  
nairgunya-stha ramante sma  
gunanukathane hareh*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 2:1:7)

“O King, even the most advanced transcendentalists who are above the regulative principles and their restrictions, feel the greatest pleasure in describing the glories of the Supreme Lord.”

There is such taste in the topics of the Lord, in His Names, Forms, Pastimes, Paraphernalia and Associates. All are existing in the higher plane. But how are we to prove the existence of this higher plane? We cannot enter at our will to have any experience of it. Then what is the proof that such a plane is existing at all? Only, that some accomplished transcendentalists of this world, experts of the highest class, they find that something is disturbing their complete experience of self-satisfaction; it is disturbing them from that, and attracting them towards Itself.

In the present day also, we find that there is a particular section, a group of people who make research in order to prove scientifically that there is rebirth, transmigration of the soul. Through methods such as hypnosis, they claim that in their previous birth they were in a certain place: “Yes, I was here... this was my

room. I put my things here, in this almira, this chest. They are still left there.” And later, when they are actually taken to that place, it appears just as they have described. Those who want to show scientific proof of rebirth, they are collecting such examples, and they are demonstrated as the basis to prove the theory of the soul’s transmigration, its continued existence birth after birth.

In a similar way also, the atmaramas, those who have superceded any charm of this mundane plane, stand as proof that there is a higher dimension of existence- because they find that such an area is attracting them, irresistably.

So that higher plane does exist, and it is not mundane. Sukadev Goswami says, “You all know that I am well established in the non-material world, that no charm for any form of the material world exists in me. But, some new, unknown type of lila, some ecstatic pastimes full of personality have attracted my heart; don’t think that this is mundane, no mundane thing can have any attraction for me. This is transcendental, you may take it for certain- I stand as evidence to the fact, that there is a transcendental world made of a higher stuff, of higher dignity, higher quality. I stand as evidence to the fact, because nothing of mundane character can affect me, can disturb my balance, my equilibrium. The equilibrium of such full, all-spiritual consciousness cannot be disturbed by any worldly attraction; some supernatural attraction has come to disturb my equilibrium, and attract me towards Itself.”

*atmaramas ca munayo,  
nirgrantha apy urukrame  
kurvanty ahaitukim bhaktim  
ittham-bhuta-guno harih*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 1:7:10)

This verse is describing the attraction felt for the super-subjective plane of life by those who have already attained self-realisation. But for those who are in the disciplic order, the lineage of descending knowledge in devotion, though what they experience may seem to be of less degree, less intensity than what is described here, still, through their sukrti, their fortune, and their sraddha, faith, those devotees feel themselves to be most extremely fortunate. They are like witnesses: though themselves very small, very insignificant, they are the most fortunate witnesses to something that is infinitely great.

Their feeling is: “Here there is something extraordinary, something

unexperienced; and the heart of my heart is hankering for that. All the charms of this world are finished for me, forever. Now if I want to live at all, I shall live for that- at any risk. Whatever little taste I have got for that wonderful thing, my whole future is invested in it, at any risk. I can't do without it; I can't stand to live without it. I can't live without that great thing. I must have it, I must attain such a position, otherwise I do not like or want any sort of existence. I have had a little peep into that beauty; now, that is my life. My life is there. If I want to live at all, I must get it; without it, everything is tasteless. I have finished with all other standards of life; they hold no charm for me, they are all tasteless. I only want that thing. That is the fulfilment of my life, what makes my life worth living. Life is worth living only because it has got that ultimate connection, connection with that fulfilment."

How is one to attain that fulfilment? Only with the association of those who are eager for it. "Birds of a feather flock together"- there are others also, of similar nature and if you want such a thing, then go, and mix with them, and jointly try to get it, by mutual help. In that field of divine aspiration there are the experts and the beginners. The newcomers advance by the association of those who are in a position to help them; and through giving their assistance, the helpers are also helped, given nourishment, as so many things of substance are drawn out of them.

## **Graduation of Consciousness**

**Devotee:** From where theism begin? From its lower stages up to the higher, what is the gradation; what are the different conceptions?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The whole gradation has been described in the following way by Bhaktivinode Thakur in Caitanya-siksamrtam.

First there is *ascadita-cetana*, fully covered consciousness, like in the trees and stones; they are *ascadita*, covered, thickly covered. Consciousness is there, but it is thickly covered.

Next, there is *sankucita-cetana*, as we find in the animal kingdom a very narrowed consciousness. Then, *mukudita-cetana*, just opening consciousness, just awakening, as amongst the aborigine class. It is mukudita, not developed to a proper stage, to a standard it is half animal, half man, such a sort of civilisation. Here we find animism, worship of the various nature gods. Above this there is *vicodita-cetana*, in which there is some conception of God. And this is where *varnasrama-dharma* begins.

**Devotee:** Are Christianity and Islam at this stage, *vicodita-cetana*?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes. Then lastly there is *purnovicodita-cetana*, fully opened consciousness, and its corresponding conception of God; that is Vaisnavism.

This is the general gradation; but again, there is sub-division in the human section. In *vicodita-cetana*, in the human stage, even before we find proper theism, there is morality. No theism has yet emerged, but there is morality. That constitutes the utilitarian class, altruistic class: they have got recognition of morality, but they don't find the necessity of the existence of any God.

There may be also theism without much moral conception. 'Theism', so-called theism, is there, but no moral conception. Those of this persuasion do *himsa*, violence, towards so many jivas by indiscriminately butchering, murdering, living creatures; they engage in this and other such immoral practices, and also go on with a conception of God, with theism.

After this, we find there is morality-plus-theism; and the lower part of this is morality plus imaginary theism *kalpitasesvavada*. The *kalpitasesvavadi* propounds an imaginary theism, combined with morality. For example, the thinker Comte, in France. He said, that to have a conception of God is useful to us because it can be of help to us in society, it can do the work of the police by keeping the people in good order. It is seen to be the case with the general population, that if you encourage them to be God-fearing, if you spread this consciousness, then we shall all enjoy moral benefit, moral order in society, automatically and very easily. This was Comte's theory. And we may consider that the teachings of Sankaracarya, as we have mentioned previously, are also of such category: imaginary theism, with morality.

After this, there is real theism, with morality. Real *varnasrama*, as given by Sri Ramanuja, and other conceptions of a similar nature, are of both morality and

theism, but real theism. Real varnasrama is theistic, and with a moral basis morality and true theism.

After attaining the stage of true theism real theism, on a moral basis the next higher stage of attainment for the jiva-soul is purnovicodita-cetana, and that is Vaisnavism. Vaisnavism represents purnovocodita-cetana, fully opened, fully awakened consciousness. It is full-fledged theism. It may be described as ‘theism without morality’ in that morality is existing there according to the complete theistic conception; morality, in and of itself, has got less importance.

The guiding principle employed at this stage is: whatever is necessary for the service, for the satisfaction of the Lord. For example, a devotee might also steal a flower to offer the Lord, so that the man who has cultivated that flowering tree may be benefited. It is theism in the fullest way, such that everything can be utilised for the satisfaction of the Lord; if this can be done, then everybody will be helped, will be benefited.

In this way, the theistic conception expands, it develops, to this point that everything is for Him: Reality is for Itself, it is for Him everything is for Him, not for any other individual ownership. The Owner is One. The conditioned souls are not conscious that they are His, that they belong to Him; they are like children who do not know of their guardian. But the devotees know, they are conscious of that: “This boy may not know that his guardian, his father, is there; but I know, I know it is so. The boy may be reluctant, but I must take the boy to Him; I must carry him, in spite of his reluctance, to his guardian.” The devotees are conscious that ‘Everything is for Himself’, and they utilise everything in that way, and thereby do good to all. Their life, their campaign in any and every way is such, whether or not it may be tasteful to the ordinary so-called religious or moral people. The devotees are right, independent of those others’ opinion. Everything is for Him, for the Lord. Sri Krsna says:

*aham hi sarva-yajnanam  
bhokta ca prabhur eva ca  
na tu mam abhijananti  
tattvenatas cyavanti te*  
(Bhagavadgita 9:24)

“I alone am the Enjoyer, the Lord and object of all sacrifice. Those who do not recognise My true transcendental nature fall down.”

From this viewpoint, all conditioned souls in this world everyone, including those who are masters of the moral and scientific knowledge here all are considered ‘minors’. The soul in bondage, any baddha-jiva, any jiva in bondage, is minor. The ‘majors’ are those Vaisnavas who know that ‘everything is for Himself’, and the consequence of this understanding, that the soul must ‘die to live’. They know that there is only one Enjoyer, and that everything is meant for His pleasure, His satisfaction, and that it is by dying to any separate interest, to his false ego, that the soul can truly live, can live in the world of divine service. Those Vaisnavas are the guardians of the whole creation, and they utilise everything for Him, to the real benefit of everyone in the whole world. Can you conceive of this? Can you follow?

**Devotee:** Yes

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** If you are able to understand this, then you will find some harmonious existence in this world. You will understand things in their proper perspective. Otherwise there is only ignorance of what is what. And according to the degree, the density of the ignorance, there is gradation, subdivision: tamah, to maha-tamah, to maha-maha-tamah. Nature is divided into sattva, rajas and tamas, and within this there are many subdivisions. There are those of the very lowest section where the ignorance is very thick; then those a little above that, their ignorance a little less; and those above that still. Similarly, there is gradation in those under the mode of passion, under rajah-guna; and above that, in those under the higher, sattvic nature. And the nirguna plane is above all the various material qualities, a unified plane where one Guardian, one Master is guiding every limb and every idea of a person such a person is in touch with full-fledged theism.

**Have You Ever Seen God?**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** One foolish person once remarked, “I have seen Krsna not only myself, but I have shown Krsna on the tamarind tree on the other side of the Ganges and there is so much evidence. So many men saw Krsna, I showed

Him to them.”

I said, “Why are you cheating yourself? I am told that you are a brahmin boy and coming in contact with these sahajiya vaisnavas, you have become degraded to such a state.

You see Krsna? Krsna cannot be seen by these eyes. He is *adhoksaja*. We have learned something, consulted with saints and we have read some sastra, Veda, Upanisad, Bhagavatam, Gita, all these things we have gone through. So, don’t deceive your own self. You know yourself, how you are. You are still a slave of your senses. You have got lust, anger, so many things. You feel it and I also know that. You are not only deceiving the foolish persons but what is more dangerous you are deceiving your own self.” Very strongly I said this, then he got some impression and after some days he gave up that female dress and shaving his hair, came to me. “Now enlist me amongst your disciples.”

Krsna is *adhoksaja*, He cannot be seen, and for Him to descend is very, very rare. He comes down from the spiritual sphere to the mental sphere and becoming so strong that when our eyes open they are overflowed with the vision of Him. Then, when He withdraws, nothing remains.

So, it is not so easy, there are so many stages, *adhau sraddha*, *sadhu sangha*, *bhajana kriya*, *anartha nivriti*, *bhakti*, *bhava-bhakti*, *prema-bhakti*, the stages are there, like mathematical calculation. We can trace in a man, by measuring with this philosophical computer, how much progress is there. Has he got *sraddha* proper? He will say, “Oh Siva, Krsna, Kali, Sakti, all are God, all are equal.” And that type of man will say, “I have seen Krsna.” We reject it.

The standard measurement, criterion is there, in what stage one will see Krsna and when he has seen Krsna what will be the after-effect? One who has seen Krsna after that, what behavior will be there? All these things should be considered. The sahajiyas who take Krsna, *svayam bhagavan Krsna*, to be in the lower level, we hate them. They are born offenders. Sanatan Goswami and Jiva Goswami have given the calculation that by elimination of so many things within our area of knowledge we may go to that transcendental side. It is not a very easy affair.

**Devotee:** I am asking you because I am seeing your quality of heart and I know you have so many years of sincere service to Krsna.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** I will say that I have not yet seen Krsna, but I am on the way, in search of Krsna. I have not got Him, not seen Him, but I am in the search for Krsna and I feel that I am on the real path. What has been said to exist in the path, I have some experience of that. I am in the real path of Krsna, that much I can say, but I have not the audacity to say that I have seen Krsna or I am in lila with Him. All these things I revere and I also don't want to have it so cheaply. Cheap Krsna I don't want. This market Krsna I do not want. I want to have darsan of that Krsna as guided by my Guru Maharaj, either in this birth or hundreds of births after, it does not matter. I am not going to deceive anyone by any wrong statement, but I think I am in the path by the grace of Guru Maharaj. That I can say and I feel it.

**Devotee:** Sometimes in the songs of Bhaktivinod Thakur he says, "I am a resident of svananda-sukhada-kunja" and he is speaking as if he is in lila.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** His highest ideal is that. He is describing his ideal life. Seeing from afar, from a distance, something like that. He is describing the feeling within his inner heart, "Suddenly I had a flash, I saw it, and then when I went to mark it in a particular way, it vanished." Something like that.

**Devotee:** I have not had any flashes. I need one so desperately.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** If He is gracious you may get it, by His mercy. Don't try easy marketing, you will be cheated. Pray. Make yourself ready to pay a higher and higher price. Don't accept any bargain, then you will be a loser. Why? We are after absolute. Absolute can never be finished. Then, we say that we are seeking the Absolute, but practically we feel that we want to be master of the Absolute. It is impossible. That sort of aspiration should be crushed, nipped in the bud. In this search you should be willing to die. 'Die to live,' don't be miserly. Try to give yourself completely. Then as much as you will be ready to sacrifice yourself and can successfully do it, then automatically you will find yourself in some other plane. But, as a subject and making Him the object, you will be able to make Him prisoner? Don't think like that. Try to become His prisoner.

**Devotee:** I was trying to serve with that mood.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Keeping your subjectivity you cannot have any contact with Him. Your old self is to be dissolved and your new self will come out and

you will find all around Krsna consciousness, and then sometimes Krsna may be pleased to give you the touch of His existence, in different ways. Not as though I am an inquirer and I want to make Krsna the object of my inquiry, to imprison Him in my imagination, the prison-house of imagination.

When I had not yet joined the Math I was a law student and the nationalist movement came. Just in the front of the Calcutta University Hall, one gentleman was delivering political lectures, so I left there and I went up the hill across the road. There I found a sadhu coming down. I asked him in broken Hindi, “Have you seen God? Can you show me God?” The sadhu replied in such an inspiring voice, “Don’t you see? Don’t you see Him? Look at all this, the atmosphere, the trees, the water, the view, all these things. Cast your glance upon the whole of the environment. Can’t you feel Him? Can’t you see Him?” With so much inspiration he said this, that at that moment I saw that conscious backing. Whatever exists, just in the background, I found some spiritual existence. In such an impressive way he said, “Don’t you see Him? Look at the sky, the trees, He is there, He is everywhere. Can’t you see? Only He is there.”

By our continuous engagement we shall come to this stage, “Krsna, Krsna, Krsna, oh Krsna”. Talk about Krsna, then hear about Krsna, take the name of Krsna, take His prasadam, collect for Him. In this way gradually we shall enter into the intense feeling of His halo, His luster and gradually we shall come to have a conception according to our capacity. Always remember the Infinite is in His one part:

*athava bahunaitena kim jnatena tavarjuna  
vistabhyaham idam krtsnam ekamsena sthito jagat*  
Bhagavad-gita 10.42

“Arjuna, what more shall I say to you? Who am I? Everything you can imagine is there in only My negligible part. You are going to inquire about that, not something cheap. Then after that what will you do?” Mahaprabhu said, “I am searching after Him but I have not got a little bit of that divine love, na prema gandho ‘sti darapi me harau. Otherwise how can I maintain My life, sustain My life without His company, without His grace.”

*yugayitam nimesena chaksusa pravasyaitam  
sunnyayitam jagat sarvam govinda-virahena me*  
Siksastakam 7

Yugayitam nimesena, one moment seems to Me so many light years; chaksusa pravyasayitam so many tears ran down My eyes, sunyayitam jagat sarvam, the whole world seems to Me only a vacant background, govinda-virahena me because I still cannot get the company of My beloved Lord Krsna.

Student: Sometimes I am thinking I have given so much and all I want is a little drop, just a touch so I can be inspired to do more. Not that I want to enjoy Krsna, but some reciprocation, “Yes, I am there.”

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: This is nothing. Taking food, walking, taking bath, dress, so many comforts we are seeking and what demand are we going to fulfil? Try to calculate everything in the terms of infinite. No finite thing, however great, can come to the infinite. The very composition of infinite is of another type. We see all as His dissatisfaction. “I have done nothing.” When you will be in this path you will think, “I can’t do anything to approach Krsna.” That is a unit of measurement towards the infinite. “I am doing this, I am doing that, I am doing so much, I am paying so much value,” – that is the opposite way. Those that are really in the path of Krsna they are feeling, “I can’t do anything for Him.” The whole attitude will be changed. This idea we have been given by our Guru Maharaj, the nature of the way of real searching.

Once, two Brahmacharis, after ten years of service, they came to Srila Prabhupad (Saraswati Thakur) to put some questions, and they were hesitating to put the question. Then Prabhupad himself asked them, “It seems that you want to speak something to me but you don’t speak.” “Yes, we came to say something to Your Holiness but we don’t venture.” “No, no, say what you have to say.” “For ten years we have come and we are doing service as we are ordered but so far we did not feel anything about Krsna, any progress.” Prabhupad asked, “What you say at present, is it true? Are you sincere in your statement?” They replied, “Yes, what we say is true.” He told them, “Then it is alright. You continue, don’t be afraid.” That was his point. What does it mean?

You have not acquired anything. You are searching for something but you have not got anything concrete. That feeling is a good sign. If you would say that I have got so much knowledge so many things, then that is progress in the egoistical way, that you can feel, that you can know, you can compete. Instead you must empty yourself. It is a very striking thing. Can you understand? Only negative hankering for Krsna is the measurement of the progress in that way. “I have nothing, I can’t relish anything, I am going to be mad, not yet I have got

any trace of Krsna.” The way is in that side, viraha-vipralambha. The other day I was saying all risk no gain, the way is like that. No risk no gain, but all risk no gain – the way is like that. You risk everything but you won’t get anything, because what in our terms is gain and loss, has captured us on the negative side. We do not know the measurement.

Prepare yourself. Don’t be satisfied with anything, thinking, “This is Krsna.” It is not Krsna. Neti neti neti! Neti, eliminate the falsity and in the background you will be able to find something real. “It is there. It is with the scripture. It is with the Guru and the Vaisnava, but I have nothing. It is their property all the time, not mine. It won’t be my property, it is the property of my Gurudev.” In this way the angle of vision will be set. The property of my Gurudev, the property of Nanda, Yasoda, they can deal with Him in anyway, but I am a sight-seer. I will be asked by the servitors “Do this, do this for His service.” That position is better for me. Not to approach the nearest but from far off. I am not fit. I am not fit. We have to take that course that we are unfit. The unfitness should be our first thing to analyze, the first thing open to us, unfitness.

Why shall I conquer, then see Him? We need saranagati, self abnegation. I must undue what I am, dissolve my ego, then He is there. It is difficult to dissolve one’s ego. When the ego is fully dissolved then also another ego will come out through service. When we have eliminated the present ego, and come to the very gist of the soul conception, then we find ourselves in a wonderful atmosphere and through service we will gradually enter into it.

We shall look at the example of that Western sannyasi. We are told that he was very mad in his dancing to show that he was inspired with Krsna-rasa. I never saw our Guru Maharaj dance and chant, only soberly talking about Krsna. If any time, with his controlled mind, any tear was oozing from his eyes very stealthily he removed them. He was very eager not to express any feeling, and if any feelings, or sentiments came out, very fearfully he tried to conceal them.

That was his nature, not to show. Whereas that Ram Das Babaji and others, what do they think and what do they do by showing mad dancing and shedding tears and shivering? All this show drew the common mob towards them and Prabhupad had to explain that these things are no real sign of devotion. Koti mukta madhye durlabha eka krsna bhakta. Amongst millions of liberated souls, one Krsna-bhakta is hardly to be found. Try to come in the vicinity of the infinite. We have to cross the infinite and dissolve ego. Hegel said, ‘Die’. Learn

to die first and die not for this or that but for the Krsna conception coming from Gurudev, ‘Die to live.’

## Hearing to See

Man proposes and God disposes. Proposal is directed upwards, and disposal comes down. The waves of suggestion and acceptance are all the Lord’s lila.

*naiva tasya krtenartha, nakrteneha kascana  
na casya sarvva-bhutesu, kascid artha-vyapasrayah*  
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 3.18)

“In this world, a self-realised person who rejoices in the soul does not accrue piety by the performance of actions, nor does he incur sin by abstaining from duties. Amongst all living entities, from the highest life-forms of the planet of Lord Brahma down to the world of immobile organisms, he never depends on anyone for any personal demand whatsoever.”

For one who is self-realised, any and every wave is welcome for he is able to read the deeper meaning.

*rte ‘rtham yat pratiyeta, na pratiyeta catmani  
tad vidyad atmano mayam, yathabhaso yatha tamah*  
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.9.34)

Srimad-Bhagavatam asks, “What is the conception of maya?” *Rte ‘rtham yat pratiyeta* – what seems to us to be the right reading of the environment, is actually not so. *Arthesu abhijnah* – the meaning and purpose of every incident is known to Krsna. Many events are harmonised together and are for the purpose of serving Him. But when there is localised interest there is a clash. Imperial and universal interests clash with provincial and local interests. *Arthesu abhijnah*. He alone can know why each straw is moving to this side or that. He is the only knower of everything.

Only He knows what purpose is served by the grass bending in the wind to this side, and not that. All these movements taken together in harmony, go to Him. Arthesu abhijnah svarat. He is not responsible to anything or anyone. The universal meaning of every event and incident, even the movement of a piece of straw, is all-purposeful and all-meaningful to the Absolute. It all contributes to the absolute satisfaction of Krsna. That is the meaning of the phrase, *rte 'rtham yat pratiyeta*.

*Arthesu abhijnah*. Artha means universal. And what is the real purpose of every movement? It is for the one Universal Absolute. That absolute current goes towards the satisfaction of Krsna. But that reading is not possible by the superficial jivas. The jivas cannot read or conceive the real meaning of everything. The jiva will have a different reading of the circumstances, but that will be superficial, and that is maya. We may interpret in our own way the reason for an earthquake, or a storm, or anything, but that reading is from our local interest – the real meaning is hidden. This is maya, and on the basis of that we are performing so many activities. All our interpretations are from the plane of local interest, so give it up!

*sarva-dharman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja*  
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 18.66)

Give up your local interest and identify yourself with the current of that plane of universal interest.

*rte 'rtham yat pratiyeta, na pratiyeta catmani*

Without knowing the real meaning, what we feel and read is the wrong reading of the environment – it is maya. We miss the universal purpose, and from local interest we read. “Oh, this is for this purpose, this is for that purpose.” But this is local interest. What we conceive, feel, trust and believe, is not in consonance with the universal reading: it is maya. Even our belief is within the realm of maya. Our conceptions will have no standing in the interest of the Absolute. What we read in the local interest, we will not find if we go to read from the universal interest.

Our disease of local interest and conception will be cured and removed when we see that everything is meant for Krsna and we become one with that interest.

*rte 'rtham yat prtiyeta, na pratiyeta catmani*

*tad vidyad atmano mayam, yathabhaso yatha tamaha*

That feeling, that conception, is known as maya, “what is not.” It is apparent, but not real. What is not real, that is maya. Even what I think to be real, is not so. Ma-ya – ma means no, and ya means what – “What is not.” Apparently it seems to be, but the fact is, it is not so: that is maya. In such a plane we eliminate the infinite interest and instead we see things by measuring according to our own interest. We measure everything only from the angle of vision and stand-point of our own selfish interest. In this way we ignore the infinite representation, position, duty, and service. This is maya.

Yathabhaso yatha tamah – light and darkness both exist. The absence of truth is not truth: it is tama, darkness, ignorance, mistake, and error.

*aham evasam evagre, nanyad yat sad-asat param  
pascad aham yad etac ca, yo ‘vasisyeta so ‘smy aham*

*rte ‘rtham yat pratiyeta, na pratiyeta catmani  
tad vidyad atmano mayam, yathabhaso yatha tamah*

*yatha mahanti bhutani, bhutesuccavacesv anu  
pravistany apravistani, tatha tesu na tesv aham*

*etavad eva jijnyasam, tattva-jijnasunatmanah  
anvaya-vyatirekabhyam, yat syat sarvatra-sarvada  
(Srimad Bhagavatam, 2.9.33-36)*

The ontological base of the whole Srimad-Bhagavatam is contained within these four slokas. The Lord is present everywhere in a direct or indirect way.

One in the uttama-adhikara (highest) stage makes no attempt to preach.

Distribution of propaganda is for those in the madhyam-adhikara (middle) stage.

It is there to take everyone from the narrow conception to the bright conception – from the improper to the proper conception, sambandha-jnana – and they will carry out their activities accordingly.

*siddhanta baliya cite na kara alasa  
iha haite krsna lage sudrdha manasa  
(Sri Chaitanya-charitamrta, Adi 2.117)*

To engage us more earnestly towards service sometimes hearing is necessary. To hear just for the sake of hearing, is luxury. But hearing for engagement, that is

proper hearing.

The master calls, “Oh you, please bring me a glass of water.” But the student remains sitting. “Did you hear me?”

“Yes, I heard.” But still he remains sitting tight – that sort of hearing won’t do! There is a saying amongst the sahajiya section: “Gurudeva asked for a glass of water, but I am engaged in Harinama. ‘No, Gurudeva, I’m engaged in Harinama.’” That is self-deception.

Especially in the beginning, the importance will be the consideration of urgency. In Gurudeva bhajan will be present as service in a higher degree, not in us. By serving him I can partake in the higher quality of kirttan, and that can come within me and improve the quality of my bhajan. Sadhu-sanga and Nama-kirttan are important. Nama-kirttan has been recommended, but not without the association of the sadhu. That sadhu will be the higher, superior quality devotee, and sadhu-sanga means serving him. Sanga does not mean just bodily association but sanga is possible only through the serving attitude – not by opposite dealing or idly sitting. Sanga means sat-sanga.

*dadati pratigrhñati, guhyam akhyati prcchati  
bhunkte bhojayate caive, sad-vidham priti-laksanam*  
(Upadesamrtam 4)

These are the six kinds of association with a sadhu (offering gifts in charity; accepting gifts in charity; revealing one’s mind in confidence; enquiring confidentially; accepting prasad; and, offering prasad.) Higher association is only possible with a serving attitude, otherwise there is no sanga. Lower association means exploitation and enjoyment, but higher association can only be achieved through service. By proper association the quality of your service will increase, so sadhu-sanga – sadhu-seva – is of most importance.

The Gaudiya Math stresses the importance of sadhu-sanga – serving the sadhu. Whatever you do by the command of the higher devotee will, through him, surely connect you with a higher conception of the Absolute. Whatever you do, do with that connection from above and carry out his order.

We have the experience of one sannyasa Godbrother who, leaving the order and engagement of his Gurudeva, went to the holy place of Badarikasram, and our Guru Maharaj punished him for that. So, we can see that without the order from

above, even going to the holy places may be punishable.

Without sadhu-sanga we cannot connect with the higher level. Therefore even chanting the Name may not be Vaikuntha-nama.

*atah sri-krsna-namadi, na bhaved grahyam indriyaih  
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau, svayam eva sphuraty adah*  
(Sri Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.2.234)

So the universal necessity is to learn and acquire a serving attitude, and if that is applied to Nama-bhajan, or any bhajan, that will be of great help to you.

Jihva means the tongue, and namadi means the nama, rupa, guna and lila. On the tongue the Lord's name (nama) will appear: within the eye, His form (rupa); within the mind, His qualities (guna); and in the heart, His pastimes (lila): all these will come down to you, and everything about you will connect with that Vaikuntha-tattva.

So it is not just a question of increasing the quantity, but the quality must be present. To be real bhakti, sevonmukha and seva presuppose surrender, and all this presupposes sadhu-sanga. It all originates from the association of a sadhu. From the positive direction it can come to us, so we must be thankful to that positive source. The Lord is there, but His grace is coming through His agents. So His agents should be welcomed and dealt with properly.

Whatever we can collect with our energy we should devote towards sadhu and sastra. Sadhu and sastra are our two friends everywhere.

My Guru Maharaj, Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Prabhupad, one day explained what is a sadhu, and what is karma. He then proceeded to explain that if a sadhu orders, "Bring me a flower," but when you bring the flower he says, "No, now bring me some water," and you object, "No, you ordered a flower and I brought it. Please accept this flower," that will be karma.

The sadhu is free. To thrust upon him his previous desire will be karma. At every moment he is free, so to follow his past will, will be karma. Always you are to be expectant for the immediate need.

In the battlefield, if the general orders the army, "March this side," then after noticing the circumstances to have changed he says, "No, go this other way!" Then it won't do for the soldiers to object by saying, "No! You have already ordered us to go in this direction."

Similarly the sadhu and Guru are always free, and their order should be taken in such a way. It is not that we shall stick firmly to their first order, but they are living and independent.

On being asked to do a particular service, one disciple told our Guru Maharaj, “I need to know my programme of what to do at least one week in advance.” But Srila Prabhupada replied, “But I received the order only five minutes ago, so how could I inform you earlier?” So, it is not a dead matter.

Of course, the beginners will not be able to accept that. They will receive their specific instructions just as a young boy is given the duty to every day practise writing the alphabet, “ABC....”. That is a particular stage, but then he will be taught how to spell by using those letters in a certain way. And presently at every moment he will be using the letters in many ways according to the necessity of writing. The order may come to take down a dictation, to write this and that. Just repeating “ABC...” is not sufficient.

So, in the beginning of devotional life the student is asked, “Do this thing. Do that thing.”

But when he will come in connection within the living substance he will be prepared in such a way for a new order to come, and he will have to follow that with all alertness.

When I was in Vrndavan I had a desire to meet with one sadhu who was the most famous and respected siddha-babaji of that place. I had the chance to stay with him for a few days but my Srila Prabhupad, after circumambulating Vraja Mandal, told me he was a kanistha-adhikari. He explained that this babaji was only copying as a student what are accepted as the practices of a sadhu. He was following the stereotyped direction. He was chanting the Lord’s Names, doing madhukari, fasting, reading Srimad-Bhagavatam, and performing the various formal duties recommended for the beginners, but he was not coming in contact with the living thing. He was simply undergoing training. He was simply following the training period.

In the armed forces when the new recruits are in the training period, they are asked to do something repeatedly, “Do this! Do this! Do this!” So they engage themselves in that way.

The kanistha-adhikari does not know the spirit and therefore cannot connect with the living substance. He therefore is in the preparatory life of a devotee and he will repeatedly engage in those practices.

Anyhow I had already gone to see this babaji two or three times in the evening. I

sat there silently. He had many disciples there who respected him, with two or four staying by his side. Nobody said anything to me and he could not tell that I was from the Gaudiya Math. I tried my best to read him.

On one occasion that I saw him, it was the holy Nrsimha-caturdasi day, and a reading from Srimad-Bhagavatam was begun. He recited and sometimes he spoke about various things. I continued my watch over his activities, movements, etc. As I watched him it was sometimes as if I was noticing Guru Maharaj indicating to me that babaji's nature.

After two or three days I came up with the conclusion that this man was trying his best from this plane to go up. But our Guru Maharaj has come down from there and has a living programme with a purpose to fulfil. He does not belong to this world, but he has come from the spiritual world with some order. Our Guru Maharaj has come down with something positive to give to the world.

He has some order and plan: "Go and do this!" But that babaji was trying his best to follow what has been recommended in the Scriptures. We can read about Rupa, Sanatan, and others, and accordingly have some idea and try to practise that. But that is theoretical practising: "This has been recommended, let me practise all these things and then I will get my desired result." One who follows in this way is a kanistha-adhikari. But the desired end and living result will come by working under the direction of Gurudeva and sadhu who are already members of that plane. And that is not theoretical, but practical. The difference is there in the practical necessity.

In this way I had also come to the conclusion, later to be confirmed by Srila Guru Maharaj, that this babaji was a kanistha-adhikari.

Soldiers are sometimes ordered to do ordinary things – not only fighting but also shovelling, clearing jungle, and many other duties. When marching against the enemy, whatever duty will come in their front, they are to do that. The circumstances are practical and living. It is not mock-fighting, but a real fight, and at every moment they are not always fighting. The preparation to a fight has more value than fighting in a mock-fight during a training period, even though the mock-fight seems like real fighting.

When the soldiers in the actual field find it necessary to do some other duties such as clearing the jungle, making a bridge, or a path etc., that will have more value than a practice fight in peaceful circumstances.

Of course the position of the General – of the Gurudeva – is all-important: he

must be real, not a sham or imitation. If the sadhu or Gurudeva is genuine, to clean up his stool and urine may fetch more than worshipping the Deity. That is because such activity has a practical connection. So, under the guidance of a real Acharyya, whatever we do – whether it be cooking, looking after the cows, personal service, or so many other duties – that will have more value than my independent reading of Srimad-Bhagavatam. That is possible because the Acharyya is actually leading spiritual life and he has his mission to do, and if we can help him that will fetch some higher result for us. And I will be paid by his coin, and not by any gross thing.

## Heart Within and God Overhead

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The cause is within and not in any external place. If we can understand that the cause of all our problems is within us then we will be able to get out of that very quickly. It is difficult we are accustomed to complain. According to our suffering we complain against others, that they are responsible for my misery, but this is misunderstanding. When we are able to realise that misery comes from within, sometimes individually, sometimes collectively; when we see that it comes from within and not from the outside, then we will get relief very quickly. The experts are of such opinion.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam it is said; “When misery comes to visit you, you should know it is the grace of the Lord, not only the negative side – to tolerate the misery that I am experiencing, the results of my past bad actions; not only that but with some positive tinge of nectar – it is the grace of the Lord. His sanction is connected with this particular incident and He is the All-good, the Unquestionable-good, so there must be some good object in this.”

*tat te ‘nukampam susamiksamano  
bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam  
hrd-vag-vapurahir vidadhan namas te*

*jivta yo mukti-pade sa daya-bhak*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.8)

It is His grace. He wants me to be purified as soon as possible, to release me as quickly as possible from the results of my own actions. This is His grace. If you can feel this to be so then you can get out of the misery which comes from within us.

Nothing can come without His sanction and when His sanction is there then he is connected there, and His connection means His grace. He is all gracious and we are to look for that.

We are to invite that element from the great world above and thereby promote our fortune, our fate to be connected with that wave of daya (kindness). No chaos; everything is cosmos, and the cosmos is connected with the All-good. We are to see like that. Kuntidevi invited adversity, “Always keep me within adverse circumstances so that my heart can dive deep for a prayer to You for my welfare. If I am amused by the apparent pleasing environment then I will lose my memory of You and that will be my greatest loss.”

These are the sweet instructions of the Bhagavat, and in the Gita we find the outward advice;

*manapamanayos tulyas*  
*tulyo mitrari-paksayoh*  
*sarvarambha-partyagi*  
*gunatitah sa ucyate*  
(Bhagavad-gita 14.25)

Both sides, loss and gain, both are transient so receive them with equal spirit. Stand erect and meet both sides, success or failure, both are equal because the very plane in which they appear is a concoction like a dream. To become a king in a dream or to become a beggar in the street, in a dream, both are equally false. So loss or gain in this plane is all false, don’t allow yourself to be disturbed by loss or gain, by victory or by failure. Prepare yourself to receive grace by neglecting the adverse, apparently injurious environment. Prepare yourself to be a student of this higher standard, neglecting all the junk that comes to you.

This will be better and more ambitious than to confine your ambition to this mortal world. When the reins are removed everything goes freely to Krsna, just as a horse will run freely when it is unreined. So cure yourself quickly for a

place is waiting for you.

Krsna is the Absolute but He says, *aham bhakta paradhino*, “I am controlled by My devotees, what can I do? I am not independent, I have my partiality. I cannot avoid the request of my devotees, that is my weakness. These who have left everything and have come to depend on me, how can I discourage them? How is it possible for me? Who have left everything for me and want nothing in return, if anyhow, some request comes from their side, then how can I deny that? It is possible?

*aham bhakta-paradhino*  
*hy asvatantra iva dvija*  
*sadhubhir-grasta-hrdayo*  
*bhaktair-bhakta-jana-priyah*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.63)

“Though I am the Absolute, still of my own accord I have come to a relative position; a father, a husband, a son. All these relative positions I observe of my own accord although I am the Absolute. My devotees are all depending on me and so I shall have to look after them. The Absolute does not mean He is all cruel but rather He must be sympathetic, what can I do?”

We see the Lord’s favour to His devotees in the case of Ambarisa and Durvasa. Durvasa was a great sage and Ambarisa Maharaj was a king. While waiting for Durvasa and his followers to return from bathing so that he might honour them by giving them prasada, Ambarisa took a drop of water to observe the end of the Ekadasi fast. Durvasa became enraged considering that Ambarisa had insulted him by breaking his fast before serving him.

Durvasa summoned yogic fire to consume Ambarisa, but Ambarisa remained unharmed. Suddenly the Lord’s Sudarshan Chakra (disc weapon) appeared to punish Durvasa for persecuting the innocent Ambarisa, and Durvasa fled for fear of his life. Finally finding no escape, Durvasa entered Vaikuntha and pleaded with Narayana to withdraw His weapon. Lord Narayan addressed Durvasa thus. “You demand that you are a Brahmin and demand that you are a sannyasi, but you fled for fear of your life while Ambarisa, he did not even step back when you summoned fire with the intention of burning him. He did not even take one step back no, he stood firm and with humility, thinking “If I am a culprit then let the punishment come to me.”

He did not falter, but you – when my Sudarshan came to charge you – you were flying from this place to that, to all corners of the world, running for fear of your life. Then who holds the more dignified position, you or Ambarisa? You are a brahmin and he is a ksatriya, but you observed the Ekadasi vrata and on Dwadasi at the time of paran (break-fast) you showed respect to the Ekadasi vrata for me and he also only did that. He showed respect to me by properly observing the Ekadasi vrata but you thought he had dishonoured you. You are his guest and before feeding you he has taken a drop of water to observe the end of the Ekadasi day and he did it with conscience to me.

You yourself did that vrata and he also did that and only for me, not for self-gratification. But you could not tolerate, you thought that he had dishonoured you. So you say that you are a brahmin, very near to me and that he is a ksatriya, he is far off. He is a grihasta, and you are a sannyasi, you are nearer to me; but this is only fashion because practically Ambarisa is nearer to me. He is not afraid of receiving any punishment and even as we speak he is waiting for you. He is fasting, thinking, “My guest I have not fed. While Durvasa is running hither and thither, still unfed then how can I feed myself?” He is still standing, waiting and when you return he will feed you and only then will he take Prasad. What do you say? When my devotees have left everything and have surrendered fully to me then should I not protect them?

A little gratitude I must have? Or am I a slave to your formality? What do you think Durvasa? Go to him. You will have to go to him and see how magnanimous he is. Still unfed, standing waiting for you. Go and see?” After hearing this, Durvasa returned to Ambarisa and was able to appreciate his position. Ambarisa came to him with folded hands and like a criminal he began, “Oh what have I done? All these trouble have come to you brahmin, my guest, and only for my fault. I am the culprit, I am offender, please be propitiated by me.” And Durvasa fell flat at his feet, “Yes, you are so magnanimous. This is only possible for the devotees of Narayan. You are so great. We boast of our brahminic birth and our yogic attempt, but you, you are really the most magnanimous of all people we are far below.” And in this way Durvasa began,

*aho ananta-dasanam  
mahattvam drstam adya me  
krtagaso ‘pi yad rajan  
mangalani samihase  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 9.5.14)*

“I have seen the greatness of the servitors of the Anantadev, Sri Narayan. You are so magnanimous that although I am an offender you have prayed for me. You hold an unparalleled position in the whole universe.” In this way Durvasa began to preach. Durvasa whose very nature is to always find fault in others and give them punishment by his yogic power. That is his nature, but he began to sing the song in praise of the devotees like Ambarisa.

So we will have to become cent percent optimistic and leave no room for pessimism. Our only apprehension will be that I may not commit any offence, especially towards a Vaishnava. We shall have to become very alert to this. So precious, so valuable is the fortune for which we are aspiring. So we must be very, very careful to guard against jealousy, envy from arising in us from any place. We are connected with some great force, so as much as possible we must remain cautious, careful that no disturbance will come out from us to do away with our pure aspiration. So Mahaprabhu has told us,

*trnad api sunicena  
taror api sahisnuna  
amanina manadena  
kirttaniya sada harih*

In one word – conscious. You must be conscious. Conscious that you are living in a plane that is ultimately worthless, no value, Trnad api sunicena – don’t go to oppose anyone. There is no meaning to any opposition. It is all fictitious so why should I give opposition to something that is all fictitious. Taror api sahisnuna – and if any opposition should come to you don’t care for that either. That is also unreal. Their motivation is superficial. That should not affect your inner train of thought.

So don’t care about any opposition coming to you. Don’t create any opposition to others, and still if any opposition will come to you try not care for that. It is all futile. Amanina – and don’t hanker after any appreciation from the ordinary public, for name and fame. They do not know what is what, and therefore their appreciation has got no value, don’t hanker after that. Manadena – still you must be alert to give them due respect, otherwise they will come to disturb you. Like a bribe, offer some respect to them and go on with your own company. Without being disturbed, as much as possible, try to make progress as rapidly as you can. You do not know, your future circumstance may cut off your opportunity, your connection. So as much as you are able to utilise your present circumstance, try

to do that.

“Trust no future however pleasant, let the dead past bury its dead, act, act in the living present, with heart within and God overhead.”

With this policy to guide us, go on towards the Absolute, the sweet fulfilment of your life.

### **Imaginary Perfection is Self-deception**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Guru Maharaja (Srila Saraswati Thakur) clearly said that when we are in a lower position, smarana is injurious. Rather, we should take to kirtana. Kirtana prabhava, smarana haibe, se kale bhajana nirjjana sambhava. Sahajiyas (members of the imitationist school) are fonder of smarana than kirtana. They are 'followers' of smarana. They lead a secluded life, and mentally they attempt to identify themselves with a particular sakhi of their own age.

They pretend to perform her duties, to occupy her place of service in a particular place of Vrndavana, in a particular lila, under the guidance of a particular sakhi, and so on. They are required to meditate on all these things by their so-called guru.

That is the process amongst the Sahajiya school, but we do not accept that. We consider it all false and imaginary. They are not fit for the plane. They do not have real sambandha-jnana, knowledge of Reality. They only practice the habitual repetition of a particular mental speculation, but anartha-nivrtti (removal of contamination) or any other process based on it cannot be effected thereby. Their imagined achievement is sheer concoction. They are not aware of the facts--the ontological gradation from Viraja to Brahmaloaka, Vaikuntha and Goloka. They are pukura-curiwale: pond thieves--imagining their residence at Radha Kunda. To think one can steal a pond is self-deception. We consider that kind of 'smarana' to be self-deception.

The Sahajiyas propagate that without directly receiving *siddha-pranali* (revelation of one's internal identity as a gopi) spiritual perfection is incomplete. Let them do so. Our Guru Maharaja wrote several poems, one of which is Prakṛta-rasa Sata-dusani, 'A Hundred Defects in the Sahajiya Conception.' The defects are innumerable, but our Guru Maharaja put forward a hundred of the defects in their process of 'advancement.' Mainly they take spiritual advancement very cheaply; they are not prepared to pay the real price. But the death blow to them is this:

*upajiya bade lata 'brahmanda' bhedi' yaya  
'viraja,' brahmaloka, ' bhedi' 'paravyoma' paya  
tabe yaya tad upari 'goloka-vrndavana'  
'kṛṣṇa-carana'-kalpa-vṛkṣe kare arohana*

"As one waters the devotional creeper, the seed sprouts, and it gradually grows until it penetrates the walls of this material universe and goes beyond the Viraja River, which divides the spiritual world and the material world. It attains brahma-loka, and then reaches the paravyoma, the spiritual sky, and then reaches the foremost spiritual planet Goloka Vṛndavana. Rooted in the heart and watered by śrāvāna-kīrtana, the bhakti creeper grows until it attains the shelter of the desire tree of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa in the topmost region of the spiritual sky." (C.c. Madhya-līlā 19.153-4)

One must first cross the different gross and subtle layers of the brahmanda (mundane universe); then Viraja, the extremity of the jurisdiction of Maya, or misconception; then the Brahman conception, the halo of the real or transcendental world; then, Vaikuntha, which is Paravyoma, a sphere of consciousness.

The jīva comes from tatasthaloka, the marginal position or the abscissa, and must go through higher planes where even the soil is more valuable than the infinitesimal spirit soul. Vaikunthera prthivyādi sakalā cinmaya. What is Vaikuntha? There the soil, earth, water, everything is of purer consciousness than the person who is going to enter there.

It is a land of gurus. There, they are all guru, they are all of superior value by nature; yet, we have to pass over them. As an example, consider that it may be necessary for our service to momentarily place a foot on the throne of the Lord (perhaps to place His crown on His head, etc.). But afterwards we come back

down, offer our obeisances, and then come out from the Deity room. In the same manner we must enter and remain in a soil that is made of a stuff more valuable than our own selves. When serving the emperor, a slave may come near his bed, where even his near and dear cannot go, or hesitate to go. The slave can approach, but only for service. So it is only for the divine service, for the necessity of the Highest, that we can pass through that soil. It is not an easy thing; it is inconceivable. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

Vaikunthera prthivy-adi sakala cinmaya. We must understand the conception properly. The jiva has emerged from the tatastha-sakti or marginal potency. He is a part of the marginal potency, and he must enter the higher plane. This gross world is of gross potency, aparasakti; the jiva, although marginal, is of a potency superior to this gross world, or para-sakti. Above both is the Internal Potency, or antaranga-sakti. We have to enter the plane of antaranga-sakti. This marginal potency is to enter the plane of antarangasakti - Paravyoma, and the highest quarter, Vrndavana, Goloka. It is not a trivial matter.

Srila Gaura Kisora Babaji Maharaja practiced smarana in a hut near the Ganges. Another Babaji constructed a kutira nearby, a small hut, and went on imitating Gaura Kisora Babaji, performing madhukari (subsisting on alms), sitting and meditating, and wearing similar cloth. Babaji remarked, "If a lady enters into a maternity ward, she cannot produce a child only by imitating the sounds and symptoms of labor.

Many things are necessary before that!" Only by imitating the paramahansa babaji, bhajana cannot be practiced. One must have a connection with suddha-sattva, the real plane, and then all the higher symptoms may appear. Otherwise, only speculative antics will manifest.

*na u hiya vrksopari, ana ani phala dhari'*  
*dus a-phala karile arjana*

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura asks in Kalyana-kalpataru, Upadesa 18: "If one wants fruits without taking the trouble to climb the tree, what sort of fruits can one expect?" The fruits will be ruined, or rotten. Without proper progression, it is all imagination, a madman's feat. One must gradually reach the plane of truth, suddha-sattva. There are so many planes to cross: Bhur, Bhuvar, Svar, Mahar, Janar, Tapar, Satya-loka, Viraja, Brahmaloaka. Mahaprabhu says that the creeper of bhakti grows and rises up to Goloka, and our devotion must cross all these

planes (C.c. Madhya-lila 19.153-4).

But the pseudo-devotees do not care to know what is Paravyoma, what is Brahmaloaka, what is Viraja, what is the brahmanda. Without caring to know about these things, they approach any guru, receive some mantra, and go on meditating. But if one meditates upon Radha-Govinda-lila in such an ignorant state, instead of entering Radha-Govinda-lila one will become entangled with the ladies and gentlemen of this world. One will become entangled in the domain of lust and will have to go to hell instead of going up to Goloka.

### **ISKCON Mayapur, 1973**

Srila Swami Maharaj asked Srila Sridhar Maharaj to give a lecture during the inauguration of the ISKCON Chandrodaya Mandir in Mayapur, 1973

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** This ashram is being opened today. What is its position? In Srimad Bhagavatam we find,

*vanam tu sattviko vaso gramo rajasa ucyate  
tamasam dyuta-sadanam man-niketam tu nirgunam*  
(S.B. 11.25.25)

“Residence in the forest is in the mode of goodness, residence in a town is in the mode of passion, residence in a gambling house displays the quality of ignorance, and residence in a place where I (the Supreme Lord) reside is transcendental.” (Bhag. 11.25.25)

Vana-vasa means plain living with the minimum of material things to help our life, that is vana-vasa. It is a simple life, plain living and high thinking, but there also we are masters of that little thing, that sattvika-vasa. It is most conducive to our religious life. There is no grandeur of any material enjoyment, etc. That is sattvika-vasa or vana-vasa.

Rajasa-vasa is a life where one is engaged in various activities in the uplifting of society, the world and civilization. That is rajasa, where a maximum amount of energy is spent to improve the paraphernalia where we live to make us comfortable.

Tamasa-vasa dyuta-sadanam is a life without caring for any social life, only for the maximum amount of sense pleasure and minimum amount of giving to others, to society or any paraphernalia. It is a reckless life, a life in the clubhouse or hotel – something like that. It is irresponsible life – tamasa-vasa dyuta-sadanam.

Man-niketam tu nirgunam – if we spend our life in the house of the Lord, we may live in any amount of grandeur, or anything of the type – but still it is nirgunam, because we are not masters there, we are servants.

In the vana-vasa, we lead so simple a life with a minimum of material things with which we surround ourselves to live, but still there, we are masters to command others. Here we are all servants – everything is to be served. Whatever we shall see, all around, even a tree, even a creeper or even a particle of dust is to be served and is not to be enjoyed or renounced. That is the form of life, a life of worship, a life of devotion. It is not only to please the Lord but also all of His paraphernalia and to see that they are also serving the Supreme Entity. With this idea – to be a serving factor in the all-serving environment of the Lord – this is man-niketam tu nirgunam.

So, we have come here to a nirguna life, crossing all sorts of relativities of this material world, whatever conception it may be, and to learn that isavasyam idam sarvam, the fundamental truth given in the Isopanisad, that isavasyam idam sarvam – everything here is the presence of the Supreme Entity, the Supreme Lord. With this conception we are to live in such a training house.

I was told that in Back to Godhead one gentleman wrote that the so-called universities, colleges, and schools are slaughterhouses. I am very much pleased with this idea. Yes. They are nothing but slaughterhouses, and this sort of institution, that our Guru Maharaj (Sрила Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur Prabhupad) has inaugurated in this world is to uplift us and all jivas toward the worship and loving service of the Supreme Entity. Each is like an oasis in the desert. They are life-giving and not flattering institutions, like so many educational institutions that we find.

Sa vijna mammate jaya – where this sort of training comes, that goes towards the centre, towards reality, towards beauty, towards harmony, towards a solution of life, towards nectar giving life – these institutions are only helpful and this is necessary.

Once Madana-mohana Malaviya, a famous leader in the recent history of India, came to visit our Guru Maharaj and after listening to his words he told, “Every village should have one centre of your Divine Grace.” But our Guru Maharaj answered in return that, “I want to make everybody a temple of the Lord, every human being, every human body I want to make a temple therein, not only villages.” So, that was his idea.

prthivite ache yata nagaradi-grama, sarvatra pracara haibe mora nama

With this idea he started his mission, Gaudiya Math, Gaudiya Mission. And we are seeing that Svami Maharaj (Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupad) by his grace, he is able to spread it around India and throughout the world and different continents. We are very happy to see new faces around us for the preaching purpose and spreading the news of Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada, Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur and Sriman Mahaprabhu, and the vision of Sri Krsna and His beloved.

There are elevationists, there are renunciates, but we are servitors. Geham jusam api masy udyat sada nah – true to the kindred point of the heaven and the heart. Cloister and the heart, the knowledge of these – but the hearts has been made the cloister. The gopi-bhajana is to make the heart the cloister. Not that the cloister has a separate place. The heart is the cloister and this is only possible with the Krsna conception of Godhead. All will be converted wholesale, every nook and corner. Nothing should be left out. No vacancy should be left out for any other purpose but to devote all respects to the Supreme Entity, to be faithful to the extreme. Nothing should be left. This is only possible in the Krsna conception of Godhead (akhila rasamrta murti). All sorts of ecstasy, happiness, and everything of the type can be possible in its divine form when we find Sri Krsna as the Supreme Lord and nowhere else.

There are elevationists, there are renunciates, but we are servitors. Geham jusam api masy udyat sada nah – true to the kindred point of the heaven and the heart. Cloister and the heart, the knowledge of these – but the hearts has been made the cloister. The gopi-bhajana is to make the heart the cloister. Not that the

cloister has a separate place. The heart is the cloister and this is only possible with the Krsna conception of Godhead. All will be converted wholesale, every nook and corner. Nothing should be left out. No vacancy should be left out for any other purpose but to devote all respects to the Supreme Entity, to be faithful to the extreme. Nothing should be left. This is only possible in the Krsna conception of Godhead (akhila rasamrta murti). All sorts of ecstasy, happiness, and everything of the type can be possible in its divine form when we find Sri Krsna as the Supreme Lord and nowhere else.

One western gentleman told that there are many conceptions of religion in different parts of the world, but we do not find any conception of religion where twenty-four hours can be devoted in the service of the Supreme Lord. Not only engaged on Sunday, not only twice in the day, not only thrice in the day, but every hour and second should be devoted in the service of the Supreme Entity and then nothing will be left behind. This sort of service is only possible in kirtaniya sada harih and in the asta-kaliya-lila of Sri Krsnachandra Himself in the madhurya-rasa. Sri Chaitanyadeva came down to this world to preach that, to give that nectarine life to one and all. Nrmatrasy-adhikarita – take the Name of the Lord and you will find yourself in His harem one day. For religion, money is not necessary, physical energy in great quantity is not necessary, nor are other helping things necessary. Only try to take the Name sincerely.

It should be acquired through the right channel, otherwise there will be some disturbance tampering with it. Trade in the name of religion is also going on here and there, and we should save ourselves from those difficulties by following a bona-fide path. So, on the day of the advent of Sri Krsna Chaitanya, which means serving Krsna in all aspects, this laudable attempt is being done in great quantity by our Svami Maharaj. We are very happy to get the chance to attend this function. Svami Maharaj ki jaya!

**Jagannath-dev**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Sometimes there is a conception amongst the Queens

of Dwaraka that, “Although we have Krsna as our Husband, we feel that somehow He is not Krsna in His fullness. He always seems absent minded, as if His heart is not wholly with us.” Pondering the cause of this, the Queens came to know that previously Krsna had some very sweet connection with Vrndavan and the Gopis there. Thinking this to be the key to Krsna’s absent minded mood, they began searching for an opportunity to find out how Krsna was living in Vrndavan.

They wanted to know about His pastimes there with the Gopis, and to hear the descriptions from His childhood.

Balaram’s mother Rohini had lived in Vrndavan during Krsna’s childhood, and although she is situated in vatsalya-rasa (parental relationship), she had heard many things about Krsna’s Lila with the Gopis. So meeting her privately the Queens requested her, “Please describe Krsna’s madhuryya-lila in Vrndavan to us. “Rohini was unable to avoid the Queens’ sincere request, and so posting Krsna’s sister Subhadra to keep watch, she began to narrate about His Lila with the Milkmaids of Vraja.

It so happened that at that same time, Krsna and Balaram were taking rest in a nearby room, and as Rohini was describing the Vrndavan-lila, They became aware of what was taking place. Coming to the door where Subhadra was standing guard, Krsna and Balaram could hear the talk of Rohini, and remembering Vrndavan, the Gopis and all these things, a great intensity of feeling came over Them. A great change of feeling came over Krsna and Balaram, so great that Their bodies also began to change; just as Mahaprabhu had shown when He fell at the gate of the Jagannath Mandir and His arms and legs entered into His body.

Such a change in the body is possible according to some particular feeling of ecstasy, and feeling the ecstasy of Vrndavan, Krsna and Balaram were undergoing such a transformation. And Subhadra, although She had not lived in Vrndavan, seeing Her Brothers in this way, She also experienced some sort of sympathetic transformation. Internally that feeling came to Her and externally She was also transformed. The cause of Their disfiguration was the Vrndavan statement of Rohini. Remembering that Vrndavan-lila and feeling that, such change came in Their goodies. Suddenly the group of Rohini could understand that Krsna and Balaram were there listening to their talk, and so immediately they stopped.

The Lila thus suspended, the disfigured formation of Krsna remained, and He fell into a trance. Nothing could be done to reverse the situation, and so in desperation Krsna was taken to the Nava-Vrndavan; a replica of Vrndavan that had been created in Dwaraka by Brahma for Krsna's pleasure. Although Krsna was awake He could not come out of that mentality, that trance, until He could be taken to that Nava-Vrndavan. There in His trance He could only see Baladev, and all others present were eliminated from His vision. Seeing Baladev, Krsna was happy that He was in Vrndavan.

Then He was Rohini, "Oh yes, it is Vrndavan." Mannequins of all the other residents of Vrndavan were also arranged there, and the Queens were following from a distance to see what will happen. After seeing Baladev, Krsna sees His cowherd friends Sridam and Sudam are also there. In another part the Gopis are there, and in one part Srimati Radharani is standing. Seeing Her mannequin Krsna ran and embraced Her, and when Satyabhama saw this, some disfigurement also came in Her body. While Krsna was in this temperament, Baladev was able to go to Him and gradually he was able to bring Krsna back to the consciousness of Dwaraka. The sudden stopping of His experience of Vrndavan caused His condition and only by a gradual process, His mentality was again taken to Dwaraka.

This sort of tale is there, and when Dwaraka and Vrndavan mix, that is Jagannath. He is mainly in Dwaraka, but the posing of Vrndavan is there. He has infinite forms of Lila, so what can we trace or know with our finite capacity? In Dwaraka-Samhita we find that there was an arrangement of Rasa-lila in Dwaraka also. The Queens had heard that in Vrndavan there was the Rasa-lila and that it is most wonderful. So when on one occasion the whole Vrndavan party was invited to Dwaraka, they privately approached Krsna and petitioned Him, "The Gopis have come, and for a long time it is our hearts' desire that you will show Your Rasa-lila to us.

Will You request them?" Krsna replied, "If they will give their consent then I have no objection." The Queens made their request to the Gopis and the Rasa-lila was arranged. When it was complete, all that saw it were astonished, and the Queens went to the camp of the Gopis to express their wonder. "What we have seen is the most wonderful thing, it is impossible to conceive even. We cannot properly express such a thing." And Srimati Radharani made this statement in reply, "What have you seen? That was nothing – an almost dead representation. Where is the Yamuna?

Where is the kadamba tree, the peacock, the deer, and all these things? There in Vrndavan that was a natural stage, and that was performed there in our youth. What you saw, that is nothing, a sham, a mere mockery.” Then the Queens began to reflect, “If what we saw is of such lower order, then what type of superior quality Lila must be found in the Original? It is totally inconceivable.” So the psychology of Vrndavan is all important. The attraction for that Vrndavan-lila – when that was suddenly stopped the result was a great change in the physical plane.

Of course it is not physical, but for the purpose of explanation we can say physical. That check caused the disfigurement of the external plane. It is something like when there is an earthquake. The internal movement of the Earth disfigures the surface, so the internal disturbance that was created by the recollection of Vrndavan-lila, that caused a great transformation in the superficial appearance. And when that was suddenly checked, that appearance remained. That has been pictured and shown in Jagannathdev. When the higher prospect is suddenly checked, then the reaction comes.

So Jagannath is a reactionary stage between Vrndavan and Dwaraka. The conflict between the emotion of Swayam Bhagavan and the Vaibhava-vilas of Krsna It is something like rasabhas. In higher ecstasy also, rasabhas is possible. The clash of two different waves of rasa. The train may be proceeding in a particular motion and the carriage along with it. But if suddenly the train should brake, then the contents inside the carriage will be thrown into a great disorder. It is something like that.

*adau yad dvaro ‘plavate, sindhuh parer apaurusam*

This verse says that the Jagannath murti has been there from the very conception, from the most ancient time. So every Lila of the Lord is eternal. Every part of the infinite is eternal. In the beginning of Mahabharat there is “Dhrtarastra-vilap”, and there Dhrtarastra is naming the main incidents of Mahabharat, and lamenting that, “Because of this incident and that incident I know that my party must be defeated”. But at this stage of Mahabharat none of these incidents had taken place. So how can Dhrtarastra speak of these incidents at the beginning of the narration?

It is because it is nitya, eternal. The beginning of the Lila and the end of the Lila cannot be differentiated. It is in a cyclic order and it is eternal. That is a very

difficult thing to understand. To adjust to the eternal. Everywhere beginning, everywhere end. Everywhere there is centre and nowhere is there circumference. This is the meaning of infinite. This is Nitya-lila. Everywhere beginning, everywhere end, and all coexistent at the same time. Krsnadas Kaviraj Goswami has represented this in a particular way. He has given the example that the sunrise is to be found always in one place or another. Not it is here, now there, and so on in this way.

So like the sun Krsna-lila is moving, the birth, the childhood, being shown here and then extended to another brahmanda, another universe. That is the aspect of Bhauma-lila. And in another aspect, in Goloka, we find that every Lila is also nitya. It is reflected here in this world and the reflection is revolving like the sun. It may be traced here, now here, now there – a question of space, but in Goloka, in the central place it is all there simultaneously. It is also no less in the heart of the devotees. When a devotee remembers a Lila, it may be Vraja-lila, and now Dwaraka-lila, but what is reflected in the heart of a devotee, that is also true. So in this way it is coexistent and it is continuing always. Every Lila and every part of Lila is always present, coexistent. Succession and coexistence both harmonized.

**Devotee:** Maharaj, is Guru-parampara also part of Lila?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Of course. It is the Lila of Krsna. But not only that, Maya and everything else is included in Lila from His standpoint. It is His sweet will, His independence.

*maya tatam idam sarvam, jagad avyakta-murtina  
mat-sthani sarva-bhutani, na caham tesv avasthitah*  
(Bhagavad-gita 9.4)

“Everything is in Me, yet nothing is in Me. I am everywhere and I am nowhere.” Everything will come within this conception. He can even interfere with the free will of the jiva, but still He doesn’t. He is within and He can control, yet He does not. He may choose not to control. He has this independence. This sort of conception we shall have to indent. This is the conception of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and this is what separates His conception from the Hegelian philosophy and the philosophy of Aurobindo. Maya is not a necessary part of existence, and by Krsna’s will Maya may be finished, and if He desires, again recreated.

*koti-kamadhenu-patira chagi yaiche mare  
sad-aisvarya-pati krsnera maya kiba kare?*  
(C.c.Mad. 15.179)

He can make or marr. Bhaktivinoda Thakur has written in his Tattva-sutra, that by His will, even the existence of the jiva-soul may be extinguished. This is not the general case, but still Absolute Power is with Him. Everything is designed and destined by Him, that is the expression of swarup-sakti.

*krsna-lilamrta-sara, tara sata sata dhara’  
dasa-dike vahe yaha haite se caitanya-lila haya,  
sarovara aksaya, mano-hamsa caraha’ tahate*

Chaitanya-lila is the Infinite sweetness from Chaitanya – whatever is within and whatever is coming from Him, that is all the high nectar of Krsna-lila and nothing else. Chaitanya-lila means the centre from which Krsna-lila flows in different forms, oozing from all sides and even from every pore. Nothing but Radha-Krsna-lila, Braja-lila embodied in Him, and coming out to help the public. The voluntary distribution of Krsna-lila of different nectarine tastes; that is Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

He has no separate existence from the Nama, Guna, Rupa, and Lila of Krsna, Radha-Krsna, and this includes Yasoda and all others within the relativity of Krsna. If one is there then all others must necessarily be there. So Krsna-lila means Krsna with His group. Also Vrndavan – the water, the forest, the animals, the birds, all are included in Krsna-lila, Braja-lila. And that and nothing else is all coming from Sri Chaitanya. That is Radha-Krsna in self distributing nature. Whatever comes from Him – that is all Krsna. Even in Sri Chaitanya’s childhood, when one could not trace anything of Krsna, it was there, and in different ways He was creating the background for distributing Krsna-lila to others.

*krsna-nama dhare kata bala*  
(Sri-Nama-Mahatmya – Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur)

This sound “Krsna” what is its value? Srila Rupa Goswami has explained that Krsna has four unique, special qualities. Every jiva has fifty innate qualities. Certain devatas have fifty-five, the five additional qualities partially manifest in them. Sri Narayan has sixty qualities in full, and Krsna has four more qualities

not found in Narayan. Those four qualities are: rupa-madhurya (sweet form), venu-madhurya (sweet flute), lila-madhurya (sweet pastimes), and parikara-madhurya (sweet associates). Srila Rupa Goswami has established the speciality of Krsna-lila in this way. And this is only found in Vrndavan. Vasudev-Krsna has no flute, and it has been mentioned that even Dwarakesa-Krsna is charmed to search for the rupa-madhurya of Vrndavan-Krsna, the sweet Lord of Braja, Reality the Beautiful.

### **Kavaca - protect us from the external difficulties**

**Devootee:** Srila Guru Maharaj, in the Ganesh-kanda section of Brahma-vaivarta Purana, the history of Sri Parasurama is related. I read there that Lord Siva gave to Parasurama a protective mantra, a kavaca: *Krsna-kavaca*. But one devotee told me that in this Age, Kali-yuga, the only *kavaca* which is really potent is Narasimha-kavaca, so that is the only one it is possible to accept. My question is: what is true about these kavacas? Is it possible in the present day for anyone to be given, or to accept, these kavacas which appear in the ancient scriptures? Is it necessary, or practical?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The use of *kavacas* is, on the whole, an external affair. The Mantram (Gayatri) and the Nama (Hare Krsna) they are all-useful and all-powerful, and using the kavaca to help externally, is a thing of minor importance. The nama, the Lord's Name, and the Lord whose Name it is, they are one and the same; and that is enough. It is sufficient, complete. Here in the mundane world, to help us, we can sometimes accept the kavacas but that is not a thing of very great importance. Either krsna-kavaca, or narasimha-kavaca, we may accept, to help our *bhajan* (worship); but not at the cost of faith in the divine Name, nama-bhajan, that is the best of all; even the (Gayatri) *mantram* is to help *nama-bhajan*.

*krsna-mantra haite habe samsara-mocana*  
*krsna- nama haite pabe krsnera carana*  
(Cc. Adi-lila 7.73)

“Simply by chanting the Holy Name of Krsna one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord”.

The worship of the Name, nama-bhajan, is the highest, and with our whole concentration, we shall stick to that. And to see or to look for other things to help it, may be allowed to a certain extent. But not much attention should be given to those external things; they are only something like a varna, a kind of dress, a covering, for protection. So, there is not much harm if we take krsna-kavaca or narasimha-kavaca, with the intention: “It has come to help my nama-bhajan life”. If meant in this way, it may be allowed, but it is not the highest standard.

The purpose of using the kavaca is, generally, that external difficulty may not come to us; it is to protect us from the external difficulties, superficial difficulties. But the pure devotees, the extreme devotees of Krsna, they won’t be afraid of any external difficulties. Rather, they may invite them, like Kunti devi, Queen Kunti, who told: “External dangers let them come and attack me. I don’t care for them; I shall go on with my service.”

In using the kavaca there is some karmana, some karmic connection, but if that is to help the good, then its use may be acceptable. Still, in the highest form of bhajan, everything is depending on His will: the devotee thinks, “Whether I may be in danger or in happiness, I shall go on with my nama-bhajan uncaring, without any care for the external conditions that may come to me according to my previous karma. I may be in hell, or I may be in heaven, or anywhere else; I won’t waste my energy going to any other direction, but I will go on with nama-bhajan.” Bhajan done in this mood is of the higher quality. Do you follow?

**Devootee:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** In Prahlada Maharaj, and others, we see such an attitude: “Dangers may come, at their wish, with their extreme power to disturb me; I don’t care.” So, pasu-pakhi haya tabe wherever my karma may take me, even to the body of bird or beast, I won’t pray to Krsna for favourable circumstances. I shall utilise my energy best only if it is towards Him; and I shall only want from Him, that: “Your sweet will may be victorious. You can make or mar; You can kill me, or save me. If it is necessary for Your sweet enjoyment to kill me, You can do that. I am a slave; You have got every right over me, to do anything and everything.” With this conception in the background we have to

make our approach towards Him, and that will be of the highest quality. Our bhajan should be in this line.

In our worship we are not seeking any comfort from anything outside, or from Him, also. We won't pray: "O Krsna, You please create protection. I am going towards You, so please create protection for me, please manage for my protection". Our bhajan should be of this purest type: "You may do whatever you like; I want your service. I want only that Your sweet will may be satisfied by me." There is to be such self-forgetfulness, total self-forgetfulness in the service of Krsna. The whole concentration will be: "How can I satisfy You?"

And whatever troubles may come upon us on the way, we must not deviate our attention from that main purpose to any of those external things, for then the quality of our bhajan will be less. Its quality and also its intensity will be less, if we are very eager to maintain our safety as we are going on in the path of our devotional life, as we are proceeding to our destination. Such concerns should be uncared for, as much as possible, and our only concern will be: "I want Your satisfaction". And in that attempt, one must be self-forgetful, as much as possible.

But according to their adhikara, capacity, the practitioners may sometimes take the help of some protection on their way, and that may be tolerated. It may be tolerated, but it is not the highest ideal. To seek protection on the path in this way, is not the ideal. "I am going to You, please protect me on my way, please manage for me, for my protection" our fundamental attitude should not be such. But rather, we should think: "Whatever comes to me, it is Your sweet will; I won't pray for protection."

**Devootee:** I have another question, in this connection. I am now studying Indian astrology, Vedic astrology. In my studies I have made some astrological charts for devotees. I see the natal chart is like a photograph of the karma of the person. So my question is: what is the use of astrology for a devotee, or in devotional service? It has some use, or not?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Just as general education, money, learning, physical health and other things are necessary for the purpose of preaching, so in a particular situation knowledge of astrology may be, also. But all such items are subsidiary, they are not the all-important thing. Generally, the public is attracted by the astrological statement, so it may be used like bait to capture people, so as

to gradually convert them. Just as one devotee when asked by Srila Swami Maharaj Prabhupada to go to China, to preach, told him: “I shall go there and open a hostel; in this way, men will come, and I shall capture them, for Krsna’s service!” This is, in itself, not suddha-bhakti, pure devotion, but it is anukulasya-sankalpa: it may be favourable for the cause. Namacarya Haridas Thakur used to give sweets to the children, and then ask them, “Take the Name, the Name of the Lord, Krsna. Say ‘Krsna’!” First he is distributing sweets and then telling them “Say ‘Krsna’!” It is a kind of strategy like that.

So, astrology may be utilised to create some confidence in the general public, that they will think: “This man is super-class, so I should be as a disciple to him”; and in this way gradually they may be taken towards the real path. Such an approach is anukulasya-sankalpa it may be anukula, favourable, a favourable step towards devotion proper. But pure devotion, suddha-bhakti, is not dependent on any such things.

Even jnana, knowledge, and also vairagya abnegation, indifference, renunciation, the renouncing nature they are also not a part of real devotion:

*jnana-vairagyadi bhaktira kabhu nahe ‘anga’*  
(CaitanyaCaritamrita .Madhya 22:145).

Vairagya means abnegation, “I don’t want anything”, to have no taste for all the things of this world. For example, someone may be taking food only once in a day; or even he may not be using any dress, any clothes, in all such matters he is indifferent. ‘Virag’ means indifference, indifference to everything in this world; but that also is not intrinsically a part of devotion. And it is so also with jnana, knowledge: na jnanam na ca vairagyam, prayah sreya bhaved iha (S.Bhag. 2:32-33). Both jnana and vairagya, which are the real property of the Jnani and Yogi Schools, are not a part and parcel of devotion; then what to speak of other things.

*vasudeve bhagavati bhakti-yoga prayojitah*  
*janayaty asu vairagyam jnanam ca yad ahaitukam*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 1:2:27)

Here it is told that real jnana and vairagya will come as the consequence of bhakti. As a result of devotion, the proper abnegation and proper knowledge will come. Otherwise, through the empirical method, ordinary knowledge and ordinary apathy towards worldly things cannot create devotion proper. “By

trying, by my self-abnegation, or by my learning all these worldly things, gradually I shall attain bhakti” it is not so. But, bhaktya-sanjataya-bhaktya bhakti is the cause of bhakti. Devotion is its own cause. When I get devotion proper, the real vairagya, self-abnegation, and real knowledge, will come in its retinue, naturally; that is natural, it is normal. Otherwise, neither ordinary self-abnegation, the mood or tendency of renunciation, nor knowledge of the worldly matters, can produce devotion proper, real devotion.

So the knowledge of astronomy, or astrology, or mathematics, or all the great achievements of science, like those of Einstein, they may be utilised to capture the ordinary people who may then be introduced to pure devotion to Krsna. They are a kind of bait, like laddu, sweets: by distributing the sweets one may attract the person, and then tell him, who is the Lord, who is Krsna: “The sweetest thing is Krsna!” That is in the line of anukulasya-sankalpa, favourability to the cause. And this should not be misinterpreted to mean that we should try to acquire some special power, like the knowledge of hypnotism, and whoever will come, we will hypnotise them, and then give them the mantram that is all artificial, it is a misunderstanding. But to capture the mind of the other party with such attractions like astrology, and thereby to defeat their mental pride, to crush their vanity, and then to help them to come forward with surrender, so the true thing can be distributed to them in this way, such knowledge may be utilised. Is it clear?

**Devootee:** Very clear, Maharaj. There is something else I would ask. I have now passed three years of sannyasa, three years in the sannyasa ashram. So I want to ask, to pray to your Divine Grace for some instruction, some practical advice about sannyasa life.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Keep the association of the higher Vaisnava, and go on with your duty. Always keep in association with the higher Vaisnava, the Vaisnava of higher plane, in order to keep yourself healthy, to supply yourself vitality. Whatever you do whether it is preaching, or any other service you may do all-important is to keep the vitality within you, and that can come from the different ‘dynamos’, the Vaisnavas, from their association. That is the main idea: to keep your life intact, and then go on with work. Because if the vitality diminishes, then everything will go, it will be lost. So most important is the spiritual vitality, and its supply; and the source of that supply, the dynamo, is the Vaisnava. And when the Vaisnava is absent, we can receive nourishment from the scripture the Gita, the Bhagavatam, and other books, and the writings of

Gurudeva.

**Devootee:** I am very satisfied, hearing from your Divine Grace.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** I consider myself fortunate, if I can render some service to you in this way.

**Devootee:** No, no, I consider myself to be fortunate to sit at your feet. I cannot express my satisfaction...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So, I think you are genuine, a sincere person; you have got connection with that which is unlimited, of infinite character. That is your fortune.

**Devootee:** I would like to ask another question if I may. In my country I have contact with a very influential man, he is President of a Karate Association and himself a very expert martial artist. He likes Krsna Consciousness and wants to be a devotee but he is not so much of a brahminical type, he likes the ksatriya dharma. Also, he is attracted to mystic powers and apparently he has them, also. What is your Divine Grace's view of these things? What instruction would you give to your Mission about dealing with, or accomodating them? Perhaps you could give some advice as to what way I should introduce Krsna Consciousness to this person. What would be your Divine Grace's guidance in this case, to help a person of such nature?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Just as you have already asked, regarding the learning of jyotisa, astrology, so it may be in this case also. It is of a very lower order to take physical strength, to utilise physical strength to fulfil our purpose. It is of a lower order. Mahaprabhu did not accept that. Srila Swami Maharaj also, when his Math here in Mayapur, Sri Candradoya Mandir, was attacked by a party of gundas, gangsters, did not oppose them with physical force. He was inside the building at the time, and he sent a kirtan party out: "Go, and offer yourself to be prey of those gundas." Those ruffians had come, entered the compound, and created some disturbance; Swami Maharaj asked his devotees, "Go out and challenge them, with kirtan; without any weapon, unarmed, go with the kirtan party, and offer yourself to be prey of the gundas." And thereby, that danger subsided. So Mahaprabhu's weapon is passive resistance. Not physical attack, offensive for offensive, but to show a passive attitude in order to conquer the offensive thing that will be better, and that is the policy of Mahaprabhu.

But when that is not possible, for one in a lower stage of realisation, one can take physical help for his protection, self-protection. And sometimes, if we see that the Deity or the Vaisnava is going to be prey to the rowdies, if They are being attacked, or are going to be demolished, then we are justified in using any measure against them the stick, or even the gun, or any other weapon available to us. At that time, whatever force possible we can assert. But generally, such measures we may not use for ourself; for our own protection, we depend fully on Krsna, raksisyatiti-visvaso: “He will protect me”. But in the case of Vaisnava, Guru, or Deity, we can assert ourselves as far as possible, and with all our resources; and we will be ready to give our own life, also. If sincerity of purpose is there, then in extreme cases such use of physical force may be accepted. But it is question of realisation; according to one’s own realisation, the proper adjustment in understanding and applying these principles will come.

### **Knowledge not to be abandoned**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Sometimes we may be misguided, led to believe that we must not study the devotional books. Therefore we may think, “To analyze, to know – that is not part of devotion. That is not necessary: It is knowledge, jnana, that is anti-devotional.”

Thinking in this way, we shall go on taking the Holy Name, and wherever there is some explanation being given about the devotional school, we shall try to avoid it. But that is not always best, because by hearing from the proper source, we get the kind of knowledge that gives us impetus to go on in our sadhana.

In Sri Chaitanya-charitamrta, Srila Krsnadas Kaviraja Goswami says, siddhanta baliya, we should discuss the siddhanta. Sanatana Goswami is the acharya of siddhanta. One may challenge, “What is the necessity of knowing siddhanta – what is what? I shall go on chanting the Name and wherever there is any class being given to explain Srimad Bhagavatam or Sri Chaitanya-charitamrta, I shall avoid it. That is knowledge - jnane prayasam udapasya – ‘One should totally abandon the unnecessary endeavour of gaining knowledge by discussing

empirical philosophical Truths.” (SB 10.14.3)

But the jnana mentioned in this verse does not describe that sort of knowledge that gives us a real conception of what is the devotee, and what is God. That ‘knowledge’ appears similar to jnana externally, but if it is coming from a genuine source, it is another type – another substance.

The warning about jnana is given because anyone may give any kind of interpretation of the revealed scriptures. It is not that we should try to know anything and everything – whatever anyone will say we shall run there to learn something. But when there is any revelation coming through a real agent who is higher than us, we should be very earnest to hear. That will consolidate our position and help us to go on – to progress in our sadhana.

We should not reject as ‘knowledge’ the following siddhanta: Who is Kṛṣṇa and how is He svayam-bhagavan; who is Narayana; where are the 24 layers of misconception; where is Vaikunṭha, Goloka; who is Baladeva; what are the different rasas.

If I say, “Oh, no – this is all jnana; dismiss it and take the Name.” That is foolishness. It should be considered as indolence or idleness. We should invite that knowledge which will enhance our faith more profoundly. One should welcome such discussions. The Lord Himself says:

*mad citta mad-gata-prana, bodhayantah parasparam  
kathayantas ca mam, nityam, tusyante ca ramanti ca*  
(Bhagavad-gita 10.9)

“The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are fully devoted to My service, and they derive great satisfaction and bliss always enlightening one another and conversing about Me.”

In the association of sadhus, to discuss about Him from different standpoints is not ‘knowledge’ to be abandoned; rather, it should spontaneously and naturally be encouraged. It is called istha-gosthi: gosthi means ‘combination’ and istha means ‘desirable company’. In that association, we must talk about Him. That is a necessary part of devotion.

And when bhava-bhakti awakens automatically these things will come:

*ksantir avyatha-kalatvam viraktir mana-sunyata  
asa-bandhah samutkantha nama-gane sada rucih*

*asaktis tad-gunakhyane pritis tad vasati-sthale  
ityadayo 'nubhavaḥ syur jata-bhavankure jane*  
(Bhakti rasamṛta sindhu 1.3.25/26)

“When the need of ecstatic emotion for Kṛṣṇa fructifies in the heart of a devotee, the following symptoms naturally manifest in his behaviour: he feels forbearance; he doesn’t like to waste any time; he is detached from the mundane; he is free from pride; he lives in full hope; he is always eager to serve, he always has a taste for chanting the Lord’s Name; he loves to tell of the Divine qualities of the Lord; he loves the Holy Abode of the Lord. These nine are called anubhava – subordinate signs of ecstatic love.”

If a sadhu spontaneously out of his own accord is expressing so many qualities of Kṛṣṇa, and we go away, losing the benefit of that – it is suicidal. Rather, we need attachment for that – asaktiḥ. “Oh, the good qualities of Kṛṣṇa are being explained through this agent: I must try to give my ear to that.”

Otherwise, why has the ear been created? It has been created only to receive tidings of Him. The ear and the brain have been created for that purpose only and both must have their fulfilment in kṛṣṇa-katha, hari-katha. What is the purpose of Gita? The Bhagavata? What is maya? What is svarupa-sakti? What is real knowledge and what is misconceived, apparent ‘knowledge’? All these things we must know to a certain extent because to avoid what is undesirable and to accept what is desirable presupposes some sort of knowledge at every step of our progress.

Jñāne prayasaṁ udapasya, to abandon fruitless knowledge-seeking does not mean that we must not talk about Kṛṣṇa amongst ourselves or that when a sadhu is explaining about the Lord’s nama, rupa, gana, lila then we should flee from that place. It is not like that. By jñāna – in the sense used here – is meant the teachings of sāṅkhya of the following: atheist Kapila, schools of Patañjali yoga, Jaimini, the Buddhist school, etc.

The advice to avoid them is also meant for the beginner but the preacher will have to come in contact with everything – to relegate them to their proper place.

And also sometimes jñāna, knowledge which is necessary, can come from within. There is a stage of devotion when the necessary knowledge comes from within automatically. There is a stage of bhakti where things occur in this way – it is revelatory. Through revelation we can understand. It comes without any

study, being supplied internally by caitya-guru. Sometimes knowledge of devotion may come to help us, but generally it will be by hearing from the lips of the devotees.

So the plane, the conception of Krsna in Vrndavan, is not lacking in cit, in knowledge. Cit means cetana, that is consciousness – “to know”. It is not in want of grandeur and awe such as is found in Vaikuntha. But when ananda takes precedence over cit, that it is advised, “Don’t endeavour much through knowledge.” There is sat-cit-ananda and by cit, by the faculty of knowing and understanding, we cannot achieve everything. But everything comes automatically to us by service. In service, there is also knowledge – a department of knowledge – and that develops automatically.

## **Lila, Faith and Hankering**

Sometimes it has been mentioned that Gokula Krsna, He is the original, and Goloka is the extension of Gokula. It is very peculiar. It appears like te *prakṛta* (mundane), but actually it is transcendental – *aprakṛta*. *Aprakṛta* – the term has been used to this effect; it is very similar to *prakṛta*, very near to *prakṛta*. So to give us warning that it is not *prakṛta*, it has been termed as *aprakṛta*. There is every possibility of taking the Divine lila of Sri Krsna to be *prakṛta*, to be an ordinary, fallible, mortal thing, because it is so similar. Due to that similarity the warning is given, “*aprakṛta*, not *prakṛta*.”

This all happens by His sweet will, from child to grown-up, the wave of His lila is always moving in a circular way. In Brhad-bhagavatamṛta you will find that Sanatan Goswami has written that it seems that Krsna-lila begins from the birth of Krsna in Vrndavan, then He grows up, then the play with the cowherd boys, and so many things. Then Akrura comes and takes Him to Mathura. And after, when krsna is away from home, then Nanda and Yasoda they are in a very mournful stage, passing their days in a great sorrow. Krsna is in Mathura and they are suffering from separation in this way. Then suddenly, the wheel changes, changed by Yogamaya.

Then the atmosphere comes, “Oh, Nanda Maharaj and Yasodamayi, for such a long time they are suffering, suffering because they have no child.” This previous stage, the stage before the birth of Krsna, that suddenly again comes within the wheel. Then gradually some hope, some offering to the Deities etc., that they may have a child, then again, Krsna the new child of Yasoda is born. Gradually Krsna’s lila evolves and then again Krsna goes to Mathura, all these rasas moving in a circular way, just as in a circular way, winter, summer, rainy season, then the autumn, in this way it is moving. And Kaviraj Goswami has given us to think in another way; the sun is rising here, and the next minute it is rising over there. Sunrise is always to be found somewhere in one portion of the world. Is it not? So also, Krsna-lila from Brahmanda to Brahmanda (universe to universe) it is extended like the sun. The balya-lila when it is past here then it is happening in another Brahmanda – continued, like the sun. In Chaitanya-charitamrta we find:

*‘nitya-lila’ krsnera sarva-sastre kaya  
bujhite na pare lila kemane ‘nitya’ hava*  
(Chaitanya-charitamrta Madhya 20.385)

“Although Krsna’s eternal lila is described in all the Scriptures, still it cannot be understood how it is ‘eternal’”.

It is continuous. The morning is everywhere, the noon is everywhere. It is revolving. And in a different Brahmanda Krsna is taking birth, the next moment in another Brahmanda, next moment in another Brahmanda, it is always continued.

In Goloka we find that it is also dynamic, it must move in a circular way. It is nitya – eternal. Generally we have gotten this understanding. It is nitya-lila, and not only that, we are to also have a conception of this; that if we meditate on the balya-lila of Krsna, if we meditate on the kaisora-lila of Krsna, if we meditate that Akrura is taking Him away to Mathura, then simultaneously if our meditation is real, then immediately we have a touch. So all lila is crossing space and time, every lila, every point of lila is nitya, and continuous, and that is something even sadhus cannot understand. Krsna is there and you will find His lila is of such characteristic, and also, it is not to be eliminated that there is a continuous flow; the bala, the pauganda, the kaisora, all are continuous. This is the acintya-bhedabheda of Mahaprabhu.

*maya tatam idam sarvvam, jagad avyakta-murtina*

*mat-sthani sarvva-bhutani, na caham tesv avasthitah  
na ca mat-sthani-bhutani, pasya me yogam aisvaram  
bhuta-bhrn na ca bhuta-stho, mamatma bhuta-bhavanah*  
(Bhagavad-gita 9.4 &5)

“I am everything, and everything is in Me, I am nowhere, and nothing is in Me. I am not a madman. Try to have an estimation of what I am, Arjuna. What am I? “  
Such a bold statement has come into the world of philosophy. “I am everywhere and nowhere. Everything in Me, nothing in Me. Try to ascertain what I am.”  
This sort of straight, simple and most perplexing, impossible idea, all possible together. He is that.

*jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva  
jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-varrtam  
sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanuvan-manobhir  
ye prayaso ‘jita jito ‘py asi tais trilokyam*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.3)

Give up your attempt to measure Him, and try to approach Him through faith. We are finite, so how much faith can we accommodate in the infinite? Very little, so don’t think that you will be deceived, that your faith will deceive you. What is the length and the breadth of your faith, you are tiny person? In the infinite anything is possible. So, don’t be afraid of your blind when you come in the search of Krsna, the infinite. Only faith can take you there, and not knowledge. It is clearly stated in Srimad-Bhagavatam. Never approach with the instrument of knowledge as your weapon, for that will deceive you. But by faith, the adhoksaja plane can come down to you. But if you doubt, then it may not care to come down to you. So open, spread wide your heart to receive Him, and whatever sort of wonderful lila He comes to show you, prepare yourself for that. It is so much, so broad, and wait; what are the waves of the infinite? What sort of wave comes to touch you from the infinite, the centre of the infinite, of love, of beauty. Wait and see, remain clear, open, and unbiased. Don’t go to measure with your tiny examples of this finite world of nasty nature.

*tatra laulyam api mulyam ekalam*  
(Chaitanya-charitamrta Madhya 8.70)

It is your hankering only that can help you to have a touch of that magnanimous divine thing. If you go to challenge, He’ll not care to come. What is the loss to

Him? – you are deceived. Go with your heart willing, but go forward. jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva, jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vattam. Brahma says, jananta eva janantu (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.38) “Those that say that they know something, let them be, let them enjoy their self-deception. But I have determined that manaso vapuso vaco vaibhavam tava gocarah, I could not enter into even the very negligent, slightest point of Your acquaintance. This is my finding.” Brahma says that the puffed-up fools, they may talk about anything, they can know this, they can know that, they think that everything can be known. Those fools, let them dance their foolish dance, but I am sure that no weapon, no instrument can catch even the slightest touch of Him.

He is always new, of eternally new characteristic. He is infinite, and the finite and infinite are of opposite characteristics. Then how it is possible to know Him? Once we went to preach in Karachi at the invitation of the Arya Samaj. They thought, “These Vaisnavas will be our prey, they are idolaters.” Their president came to attack and he told me, “If the finite can know the infinite, then He is not infinite.” It came to my mind immediately, and I replied, “If the infinite cannot make Himself known to the finite, then He is not infinite.” Just the opposite to his challenge, then I gave him a handshake and said “namaste” and departed.

That is our only solace, that the infinite can make Himself known to the finite, otherwise the finite cannot know the infinite. So always try to foster His Grace. The most gracious aspect of the infinite, that should be our fare, our attitude. That I have come not to deal with the limited thing, my aspiration is not so base, and mean. I have come in the relativity of the infinite. So my behaviour must be according to that. Bhakti – trnad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna amanina manadena. Negative, the negative tendency should be increased to attract the positive; “I cannot but want You, I am unfit but Your least connection I must have”, and thus we have to invite Him.

“I am poor, I am mean, there is no meaner fellow than me.” That is the way. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada used to give this example; that in a fun-fair there is a bamboo post smeared with oil and ripe banana pulp, so it is very slippery. And if anyone can climb up he’ll be given a reward, but wherever one catches the pole he slides down – cannot go up. So it is like that, we cannot go up. – Aroha-pantha (ascending method, gain by assertion) that will not give us entrance there. That path is slippery, slippery, slippery. We can come down, but we cannot go up. So are we brave enough to deal with such a thing, we have such audacity?

But still the position is there. It is by His grace, the line of His grace. He wants to distribute Himself in a line, so srauta-pantha-guru-sampradaya (disciplic line teaching the descending method of receiving Divine Grace). It is exclusive, the necessity is there. The srauta parampara, guru parampara. The knowledge and the bhajan, everything comes down from the infinite to the finite, and never from finite to infinite via aroha-pantha. That should be the backbone of our movement, always. So whatever we shall go to do, we shall look up to Gurudev.

“If you do it, it may be done, I am nothing, I am nowhere sir.” I found this in the character of Ramanuja. Once he had a debate with a Mayavadi pandit, for fourteen days, and came back frustrated, he could not defeat him. And he came to Lord Varadaraja, “What am I? I can’t defeat this man. I am in discussion for so many days and I am trying to argue, but to no avail. I am nothing, nowhere. I should not go with my head erect as an acarya of the sampradaya.” He prayed to Sri Varadaraja in His temple, and the next day, no sooner had they began their talk, than that gentleman expressed his defeat, he clearly saw, “Yes, what you have said all these days, I have understood. I am wrong. What you say is right.” By His will, that man was defeated.

So devotees are always expectant, upward. By Guru’s will, He may do anything through me, but otherwise I have nothing. If I go to assert myself, I’ll not only be defeated, but I shall also be lost. But when I shall go to show the proud attitude in the name of my Guru, sincerely, then it will be bhajan. I will help me and others also. As much as I have the tendency of receiving power from above, then my attempt will be real. And also the attempt of the acarya will always be to bring things from above, from his Guru and he is also always dependent. He can never say I am in possession. I have got, I am in possession of the potency power. No.

*jagai madhai haite muni se papistha  
purisera kita haite muni se laghistha*  
(Chaitanya-charitamrta Adi 5.205)

“I am more sinful than Jagai and Madhai and lower than a worm in dung.” This is negativity, the conception of the ego of the negative. Negativity so intense, that, “I am nowhere but Nityanananda Prabhu is so great, He is patita-pavana. So I have gotten everything by His grace Ye yata patita haya, tava daya tata raya, tate ami supatra dayara. (Gita-mala – Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur) “I can claim, because I am the most fallen. I realise that I am the most fallen. I realise that I

am the most fallen, therefore I have got the greatest claim for Your grace, Your mercy.” That should be the attitude of a real devotee. As lowly as one genuinely conceives himself to be, then so great he is in the eyes of the devotees. Dainya – humility, and laulyam – hankering, that is the wealth of the devotees. I am proud of the power of my Gurudev and never of myself. That should be the attitude of the devotee.

Mahaprabhu says to Sanatan Goswami, “Sanatan, Krsna is very gracious to you, He is sending so many things for you through Me. I don’t understand them, but for you so many things are passing through Me.” This is in Chaitanya-charitamrta, Mahaprabhu says to Sanatan Goswami. “The grace of Krsna is flowing through Me to you, I feel. I do not know all these things, it is not Mine.” It has also been mentioned, vyaso vetti na vetti va, that Vyas who has written Srimad-Bhagavatam, he may or may not know what is its meaning. It is coming for the others through him. It is also possible, sometimes. Krsna is independent, all glories to His independence.

We are His servants, what responsibility is with us? We are His instruments. He may do everything in His own way. By His will things are going on in a particular way, if His will is otherwise, then it makes another way. It is part of His lila. Everything is part of His lila, the Absolute is lila-moya. Lila – the continuous and irresistible flow of ananda – ecstasy. Only our narrow ego deceives us. Only egoism prevents us from partaking of that universal wave, the flow of Love Divine and that is the greatest thing ever conceived of, and that is the great gift of our Golden Lord – Sri Chaitanyadev. Gaura Hari, Lord Chaitanyadev.

## **Many conceptions of Godhead**

**Devotee:** If Krsna consciousness is the highest, it would seem that it would also be the most difficult for the conditioned soul to attain. And perhaps for Western

devotees, or those who have taken birth in the non-Vedic cultures, it might be especially difficult. Sometimes one may think therefore it would be easier for the spiritual seeker to approach God through the religion they were born into for example, through Christianity.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It is not a question of creed or culture, but of awakenment of consciousness. There are so many conceptions of Godhead. In the human section there are so many different stages, beginning from the atheist. In the beginning the soul is covered by dense ignorance, with no conception of even one's own self. Then, when his consciousness awakens further, he is able to discriminate, and through that he can give recognition to morality; but not yet to theism. In that stage he can see the interest of others to be like his own; so, morality comes.

When a person gets still higher awakenment he comes to find that between others, the environment, and himself, there is a connecting link, some common sub-stratum of consciousness, a common platform on which all are standing. And he will search: what is that?

Why does it exist, what is it for? When he comes to investigate, gradually he comes to feel more the importance of that plane which is connecting himself, his neighbour and the environment, and which gives some affinity, some sympathy between them.

Searching further, he finds that such a unifying plane, in which he exists, which is both within him and without him, and which is permeating everything, is very captivating. He becomes charmed by its character; he is captured by its charm, its beauty. And now, the question arises about his own relationship with that plane. What is that relationship? How is it existing? That thing which he feels such affinity with, is it only some subtle element like air, or ether, or is it something of higher order? Because he feels it within himself, in his heart, his mind and he feels more and more curiosity to know about it.

In this way, the God-conception comes within the soul. And as he searches, through the process of elimination his knowledge improves, his conception of God improves, and that is progress. 'Progress' means, to grow in conception, in knowledge; through this process, in every field, always man is progressing. Life itself is dynamic everything is progressing, it cannot remain in a static position. So, to search, and search further life means this, it cannot but be so. In science, for example, Newton gave some conception, and then so many others

came and gave a higher conception, which was more graphic, more extensive; in this way the knowledge progresses.

And just as, in this world, the primary schools are filled with students, the colleges also, and the universities and post-graduate colleges as well there are so many students of different stages, everywhere, those in the primary stage, those in the middle stage and those in the highest stage so it is with the progress of the soul, in his conception of God. There are so many souls occupying different levels of awakement.

What is the test of Vedic knowledge? How far-reaching, how deep is your knowledge about the theistic world, about the revealed Truth? *Vidyavatan bhagavate pariksara*: the Bhagavat, Srimad Bhagavatam, is the test. It gives the standard against which all other conceptions must be measured. The standard is given there: the position of that central conception, central Truth.

That Truth what is its capacity, its utility, its superiority? Srimad Bhagavatam says:

*vadanti tat tattva vidas  
tattvam yad jnanam advayam  
brahmeti paramatmeti  
bhagavan iti sabdyate  
(S.Bhag 1:2:11)*

“The different learned transcendentalists know the Absolute Truth as one undivided spiritual substance beyond duality; but they realise It in three phases, as Brahman, Paramatma, and finally Bhagavan.”

The central Truth is not Brahman; Brahman is the all-accomodating aspect of the environment. And Paramatma is the all-permeating aspect- Who is within everything, everywhere. And another aspect, is Bhagavan. ‘Bhagavan’ means He is bhagya, auspicious; He is full of opulence, aisvarya. So the first interpretation of ‘Bhagavan’ may be given as aisvaryaman: Who is the source of all power, the controller of all potency. But the Srimad Bhagavatam has shown Bhagavan in another, revolutionary aspect: it has taken the Centre from potency, from power, to love. It has shown it to be love. The Centre is love. Love is above power, it is existing in a deeper plane. Power is external, and love is more central, and higher.

‘Bhagavan’ means, bhajaniya-guna-visistha: He is of such substance that, whenever we come in connection with Him, we want to surrender to Him, to worship Him, to merge our interest in Him. We want to jump, to throw ourself to His feet. We will think: “That for which I have been searching, the Lord of my heart, I have got, here! I don’t want anything else.” Bhagavan is such: He excites eagerness, anxiety, to jump to His feet. He is all-attracting, therefore He is called Bhagavan.

His nature, His attractiveness is such, that the atmaramas, those who have no attraction for this mundane world, will also feel irresistably pulled towards Him. He has got such qualification, such quality: He attracts the soul to jump wholesale to Him, to His service. He will draw our surrender, wholesale surrender.

So, *vidyavatan bhagavate pariksara*, the Bhagavat is the test, it asks us: “How far are you advanced in your theistic life? Can you do this: wholesale surrender? Can you think of it, even? Can you think that by ‘dying’ you can live a proper life; that by dying as you are at present a wholesale dissolution you will gain yourself a new life? Are you bold enough for this?”

The characteristic of the highest Substance is not that He is Master of power, or all-knowing, with everything contained within Him, as if ‘floating in His belly’; nor that He is all-permeating, microscopic, existing in the smallest thing. All-permeating, all-pervading, or, all-accomodating- these are not the highest qualities of the Supreme Substance. The characteristic that He is the Controller of all power, He is controlling everything, that He is Narayana, is one conception. But Who attracts us unconditionally towards Himself, so we only want to fall at His feet. He is such Beauty, such Love that sort of conception is given by Srimad Bhagavatam, and that is highest of all, the highest conception against which all others must be measured. Have you got any clue of such quality, such characteristic of the Absolute as the Centre of love, from anywhere in the revealed scriptures?

Only Srimad Bhagavatam has given us the highest thing. That is the central world, the highest plane of existence we are called to live in. And Mahaprabhu came with that, He brought it to us freely. Not only are we fortunate to have the human form, but we have got such a great prospect of life as this.

But we should see: what type of existence are we presently engaged in? I can go

down again, to be an insect, a beast, a tree. I am wandering in this vicious cycle of birth and death this is my position. One moment I am at the top of the cycle; the next moment I am lost, I am nowhere. This is action and reaction. It is all only action and reaction: now I am acting as master then the reaction will come as a demand for me to pay up my debt, and it will pull me down by my ear, just as the parent or schoolteacher punishes the misbehaving child. In this way we are moving in the material plane: higher and lower, up and down, continuously. In Bhagavad-gita, Krsna says:

*abrahma-bhuvanal lokah  
punar avartino 'rjuna  
mam upetya tu kaunteya  
punar janma na vidyate  
(Bhagavadgita 8:16)*

“O Arjuna, from the highest planet in the material universe, that of Lord Brahma, down to the lowest, all are places of misery, because the residents of all these planes are under the law of repeated birth and death. But for one who attains My abode, O son of Kunti, there is no rebirth.”

How are we to come out of this vicious cycle and attain the fulfilment of our life? Only they are our friends, who are carrying this information, this news to the public: that the Absolute Centre is Love. Who are on such an errand, they are our best friend. All other seeming friends should be dismissed, seen off. They should all be dismissed, if we are sincere. And now, this will be the form of our life, our progressive life: to move towards that Centre. And for that there must be elimination, and acceptance, new acceptance. In this way, leaving all other formalities, the inner spirit must make us mad to advance further and further towards Him.

**Money from people there is poison?**

**Pradyumna Prabhu:** One question I had for a long time. I inquired, I was

talking with Babaji Maharaj, Krsnadas Babaji Maharaj and also Bon Maharaj, they were saying that in the beginning Gaudiya Math, there was some very simple life and there was much stress on the preaching and everything. They said but later, as there was money and more facility, there were some problems arising from that.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Of course, this is natural. You see Prabhupad gave explanation of the same. We take money from the visayi, worldly men, and with the money the poison also comes to be digested. So some trouble will come.

**Pradyumna Prabhu:** If we take money from people there is poison?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Of course. That poison will be minimized by the handling of the sadhu. *Visaya bisa*, one who can digest poison, taking money from *visaya*, but one who can digest it, he utilizes it, poison is also medicine. You see you can utilize the poison as medicine, his divine agent.

**Pradyumna Prabhu:** So *visaya* is poison but it can also be utilized as medicine.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So one who can utilize the poison as nectar in medicine, otherwise it will kill the person who is taking the sampati or the visayi. Understand? *Visaya visa*. There with visa the energy, sampati means energy, the energy coming and carrying the mentality of the owner. That is there.

**Pradyumna Prabhu:** In the same way I came in the beginning when Srila Prabhupad started in America, and now I see somethings are here now which were not there then. Some things which are not so good, so I am just comparing, how to always, naturally this will come as one gets bigger and bigger, more money comes, more buildings come. And many different people are attracted.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Enchanted by money and begins to make trade. Making money, begins to and his soul is dead and the activity of the worldly men begins. By amassing money the real principle is lost. If the adhikari is not a genuine one, then he is carried away by the money towards exploiting world. *Kamani kancana*. Mahaprabhu did not like to see Prataparudra because he was visayi.

*Sannyasa visayinan asau yahi ganca ta hanta hanta visa bhaka nacata sadhu.* More than swallowing the poison. For a sannyasi, it is more dangerous to see the king that is the embodiment of visaya, the embodiment of monetary wealth, in

the center of the management of the material prosperity, the king, and the visayi, josi means to tends to enjoyment, to come in connection with these two is to swallow poison, Mahaprabhu says. So one must be careful. This is of course meant for the single bhajan, that who are in the company, sadhu-sanga and the highest type of sadhu on the head, by his, to obey him, to discharge the duties given by the mahatma, and they can have clothes and things to give to the feet of their mahatma. They are agents, near agent.

You see once at Krsna janmastami, all the preachers were taken back from the compass of the country and they were concentrated to work in Calcutta, from door to door they used to have to go for collecting bhiksha. And Bon Maharaja in a party with one or two brahmacaris, went to a part of Calcutta for collection.

He asked those gentlemen, please give me the address of a few good benevolent gentlemen to whom we can approach and we get some money for our purpose. Those gentlemen showed, "just go to that house, there you will find someone." And that was the house of a prostitute. Bon Maharaja went in good faith and pushed on the door, door was open, so lady came, Oh you are sadhu, what do you want from me. And that person who asked Bon Maharaj to go to that house, he was laughing there. And Bon Maharaja gave the lady the letter for invitation, "we have got such and such festival, we want you to come, and we will be happy to get some contribution from you".

Whether the lady gave something or didn't give I don't know. And Bon Maharaj came back, these people were laughing and Bon Maharaj came to Prabhupad, and said "Prabhupad, I went to go for collection. And it happened that these rogues just guided me to the prostitute's house. I won't go out for any collections." Then Prabhupada delivered a lecture. "There are many of you who has left their own property, but still I send them out for collection. Do you think that I do it wrongly? No. The visayi always wants to entrap us within their business. But everything should be utilized, we must learn to utilize everything and anything for the service of Krsna.

Then only we are saved. Otherwise if we leave, give it away, it is left there, and when it will get any chance they will come to bite me. So whatever comes to us, we should deal with them in such a way, that anywhere I shall come across anything that would rather give some impression about remember Krsna, utilize me for this particular service for Krsna. All friendly? The left there will be enemies. But they should all be made friends. They will help me remind me,

excite me in the service of Krsna. We must have such adjustment in this world. So nothing should be left off. Do you follow? Nirbandha krsna sambandhe yuktam vairagyam ucyate. Sa pancitayah buddah hari sambandhi vastunah mumuksubhi parityajya vairagyam. That is a bogus vairagya. Artificial vairagya. This is full vairagya. To leave everything, all non Krsna, non Krsna. And proper vairagya, to see everything in the service of Krsna, nirbandha krsna sambandhe.

**Pradyumna Prabhu:** Prabhupad said sakali madhava.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *visaya samasna sakali madhava, asakti relita sambandha sarita, visayi sanga sakali madhava.* All will encourage me to serve Madhava. They are Madhava's property. They are meant to serve Madhava. They will utilize me for the service of Madhava. Anansaktasya visayan yatharham upayunjatah nirbandha krsna sambandhe yukta vairagya ucyate. Vairagya does not mean the elimination of the environment. With the environment, you will make friendly relation, establish friendly relation. You belong to Krsna, they also belong to Krsna. You alone want the connection with Krsna leaving them away, they will remain your enemy, and one day or other they will attract you there. So why you will be afraid of a particular thing, who is friendly, when you can see that it is only for Krsna, meant for Krsna's service.

So positive adjustment with environment in relation with Krsna. That is what is necessary. Everything will remind you about Krsna. The service of Krsna. This is non-Krsna. The non-Krsna seeing must be off. There is no non-Krsna. All, *isavasyam idam sarvam jagatyena jagam sarvat*, everything belongs to Krsna and friendly to you. You must dive so deep to feel that everything is meant for Krsna. But if superficially you want to go to Krsna and seeing that all these are non-Krsna and are all my enemies, that is not proper adjustment. That is not proper religion. Proper religion is proper bhakti, real bhakti, will be of this type, that I belong to Krsna and everything is meant for Krsna, they are all Krsna's property, why should I be charmed to enjoy them. No use of enjoyment, all service. I must enter into the deeper regions where all the waves that go on they are all of service, service wave. And superficially the wave of exploitation and then immediately takes the wave of renunciation. But deeper, all the waves coming to Krsna for the service of Krsna. That is the deepest realization. Do you understand?

**Pradyumna Prabhu:** About these waves?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Waves, the dynamic movements. The relationship: I am seeing, they are being seen. I am hearing, something is being heard. This is a dynamic thing. When the surface, the exploitation is being carried on. Little different, oh, this is not meant for me. There is reaction. If I enjoy then I shall have to suffer. Then like Buddha, Sankara renounced them. This is the middle point. Then the Vaisnava they dive deeper. Oh, this is not the relationship between the environment, what is going on, that is not neither exploitation, enjoyment, nor renunciation, but that of service and service of the absolute.

**Pradyumna Prabhu:** The most external is the waves of enjoyment, then little deeper waves of renunciation, then still deeper.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Indifference, and then deeper, you will say that everything has got positive meaning, they want to serve Krsna, and I am also a member of that society. That is the deepest feeling, the wave is going on.

**Pradyumna Prabhu:** To try to escape the waves of enjoyment.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Svarupa, in our svarupa also, in our different conception of our svarupa there is service, and the deepest conception, the service of Krsna without caring for the laws. And little upper, the service of Narayana, caring for the sastraic dictums. And the deepest wave of love, Absolute love, is going only towards Krsna. Everything, jivera svarupa haya nitya krsna dasa. And on the surface the enjoyment called vikrama karma, anyabhilas, then karma, then jnana, then vidhi-bhakti, then raga-bhakti. The deepest is raga-bhakti.

### **My heartfelt appeal to you**

**Devotee:** Maharaj, I have one question. I am very much afraid to write anything about Krsna consciousness because I see that I am having so many material desires; but at the same time, when I go out and I speak to people about Krsna, and the sweetness of Krsna, I see how much they are enjoying that. So I am

thinking, even though I have no qualification, I should continue to write or to preach. Is this correct?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It is laudable that you want to do good to others. Mahaprabhu has given a general instruction:

*yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa  
amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*  
(Caitanya Caritamrita Madhya 7:128)

“Wherever you go, whomever you meet, talk with them only about Krsna. Deliver this news to anyone and everyone, and new light will come to you, which in turn you are to distribute to others. In this way you will have a dynamic and progressive life and there will be no shortage of higher backing. If you obey my command, then you will find that I am there, backing you in this work.”

This is Mahaprabhu’s general advice. Such distribution is the only necessity in this world, where all are entering the jaws of death at every moment. Mahaprabhu wants His followers to be agents to preach Krsna’s devotion to the public, to speak about the special prospect of the land of Krsna, about Vrndavan.

So, it is laudable that you want to do good for others in this way; but at the same time, before doing so you must properly try to understand what is ‘good’; and then go to distribute that. This is no less important. It is very good to treat a patient, but you must know at least what is treatment, then you can go to treat them. That will be beneficial. One who is not properly adjusted, how he will venture to adjust others? First know what is your place, your proper adjustment in relation to the whole; and in that position, it will be revealed to you, shown to you what is your duty.

At the time of the second Great War, a picture of a soldier’s uniform was posted on the wall of the Writers Building in Calcutta, and at the bottom of the poster was written: “Put on this uniform, and the uniform will tell you what to do.” This was the advice there: “Put the soldier’s uniform on and the uniform will tell you what will be your duty”! So, first we must have proper adjustment, we must find our proper position, and then the insinuation will come to us, as to what is our duty.

This is the first stage; it is known as sambandha-jnana to know, who you are. And next, abhideya, the ‘means to the end’: the conception of my goal, my

destination how am I to attain that? What are the steps? Our path must go in this way, otherwise the whole attempt will be unsystematic, haphazard. We should understand what is the proper utilisation of our energy, and act accordingly. This is necessary for systematic and substantial progress towards the goal; otherwise, ‘anyone can do anything, as he likes’ and he will have to reap the result of his deeds, accordingly.

First, sambandha-jnana: one approaches the fundamental question, “Who am I? Where am I at present, and where should I be, what should be my position?” It is just as, before going on a journey I must consult the map to see where I am and where I will have to go. Understanding ones position, ones orientation in relation to the destination, is ‘putting on the uniform’; the uniform will tell me “This is your duty”; and I shall have to do that. I shall be ready to do whatever is required of me, for my real progress.

It is not that we should think, “I must be great! I shall be an Alexander, I shall be a Hanuman...” Rather, if you want to be a simple cow-boy, if you want to have the company of Krsna in that way, you will think, “It is so wonderful, to become a cow-boy, to have the duty of a cow-boy!” Rabindranath Tagore composed one song in which he says, “I don’t want to be a famous leader of the country, but rather I want to be a cow-boy in Vrindavan, in the jungle. That is a very happy ideal to me, much more so than being a great leader of the world. A simple thing, a cow-boy under the guidance of Krsna! That aspiration is very happy, very friendly to me.” Such an ambition, simple ambition, is really something great not any worldly achievements. We pray, rather, that the worldly ambition will leave us, that the ghost of such ambition may leave us forever. And to desire the company of the Lord such aspiration, though simple, is also high, very high.

But it is also possible that in a lower stage, from his present position in this world, a person will dedicate his activities to the Lord, and approach Him that way. This is also possible, it is accepted, but it is of a lower stage to approach the Lord through the performance of one’s own work. It is described in Bhagavad-gita:

*yatah pravrttir bhutanam,  
yena sarvam idam tatam  
svakarmāna tam abhyarcya,  
siddhim vindati manavaḥ*  
(Bhagavad-gita 18,46)

“Man can achieve perfection by performance of the appropriate duties prescribed for him according to his qualification. By the execution of such duties, he worships the Supreme Lord, Who is the Source of all beings and is all-pervading.”

As a result of my past karma, I find myself floating somewhere in the material ocean, amongst the three modes of nature; and whatever things, whatever materials I find around me, if I try to give them, to offer them towards the Infinite, I may make progress towards Him, from my lower position.

*yat karosi yad asnasi,  
yaj juhosi dadasi yat  
yat tapasyasi kaunteya  
tat kurusva mad arpanam*  
(Bhagavad-gita 9,27)

“O Kaunteya, whatever your action whether scriptural or general, whatever you eat, what you offer in sacrifice, whatever you donate in charity, and any vow you keep do everything as an offering unto Me.”

To connect all of one’s activities with the Lord by offering them to Him, and to go on with one’s duty in this way, one who cannot understand the higher things, higher devotion, may begin his march to the Absolute from his present position.

But the sloka at the conclusion of Bhagavad-gita calls us:

*sarva-dharman parityajya  
mam ekam saranam vraja  
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo  
moksayisyami ma sucah*  
(Bhagavad-gita 18,66)

“Totally abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender exclusively unto Me. I will deliver you from all kinds of sinful reactions, so do not fear.”

This is the conclusion of Bhagavad-gita: the clarion call, to surrender. In his commentary on Sri Gita, Sri Bala Gangadhara Tilak has noted: “In this last sloka, Bhagavan Sri Krsnacandra has served nectar, in a golden pot: ‘Wherever you are, leave your duty, your post, your place of duty, and immediately come to Me. Everything will be fulfilled; complete fulfillment will come to you. If you come to Me, the whole fulfillment of your life will come to you. It does not matter where you are posted at present; it matters little. You may be a soldier,

you may be a priest, you may be a dacoit anyone! But if you leave your position and come to My feet, your aspiration will be perfectly fulfilled.”

This is Mahaprabhu’s call, the call of Gauranga: with a flood of tears, Gauranga is dancing, and appealing to the people, begging the people, “Take the Name of Krsna!”

When Mahaprabhu decided to take sannyasa, His devotees did not know that He was going away, that He was leaving Navadvip forever. But the night before He left, He attracted many of the devotees to come to see Him for the last time; as if intuitively, they were drawn to Him, and they flocked together, crowded together at His house. Everyone brought for Him a garland; and Mahaprabhu was giving everyone, all His devotees, those garlands from around His own neck, and ordering them: “When you go from here, speak only of Krsna.”

*apana galara mala sabakara diya  
ajna karena gaura-hari krsna kaha giya  
ki bhojane ki sayane kiba jagarane  
aharnisa cinta krsna boloho vadane*  
(Chaitanya Bhagavat, Madhya 28,25,26)

“I advise all of you, my friends, with this garland: take the Name of Krsna! While eating, while taking rest, while waking, always take the Name of Krsna. This is My last advice, My earnest entreaty to you all: take the Name of Krsna. Whatever you may be engaged in, always think of Krsna and call His Name aloud. This is My last appeal to you all just try to utilise all your time taking the Name of Krsna. By any means, try to the utmost to come to Krsna. There is no other necessity. This is My heartfelt appeal to you, O My friends.”

In our time also, we have seen that our Guru Maharaj Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur also preached with so much force, so much urgency. Once he was present at a mahotsava, a big festival, in Mayapur. When the celebration was over, Guru Maharaj was sitting in a canvas chair on the verandah of his room; many people were coming before him, offering him obeisances, and then leaving for their homes. I was always very eager to hear him, and I was present at that time. He was saying, “Don’t cheat me, you people.” I thought, “Why does he say that?”

Where is the question of cheating him? Everyone was invited to this festival, they came, and now they are leaving. What is his point, about cheating?” But the

next thing he said was: “You all came with the understanding that you will engage yourselves in the service of Krsna, and so I have entered into some relationship with you. And now, after attending this ceremony only as a show, a fashion you are going home to engage yourselves in worldly affairs. But your assurance to me was that you would all serve Krsna...” In this way he showed some disappointment.

Then he continued, “You may say, ‘O, there will only be a little delay, I have got some important business, and after finishing that, I shall come back and join you, as soon as possible’; but I say, no, no! Even if you tell me there is a fire, and after extinguishing the fire then you will return, then I say, that is also not necessary. There is no necessity of extinguishing the fire. It may burn the whole world it does not do any harm to you, the smallest harm to you. You do not lose anything; rather, you will be saved if that world, burnt world, gets out of your mind. All your inner necessities are met only in the holy feet of Krsna.

None can satisfy your inner hankering but Krsna, akhila rasamrta-murtih, the reservoir of all sweetness all the rasa, everything sweet you are aspiring for, or that you may ever aspire for all is in His holy feet. And all this world, let it be dissolved to ‘zero’; it can’t have any affect on you, you are not affected by that at all. Rather if the whole thing disappears, vanishes, if it is burnt to ashes, you may be saved, saved from that misconception.” But it is not so easy to burn the world of your present enjoying conception to ashes; it is very hard to burn that world to the finish! Like a witch, it is catching you.

**Devotee:** Yes, yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The solution lies in the service of Gauranga, Mahaprabhu. As much as we can give ourselves to the holy feet of Sri Gauranga, automatically we shall find we are in the service of Radharani. She is the highest negative potency, which can draw the maximum rasa from the positive Krsna, Reality the Beautiful. Rasa-raj and maha-bhava: Krsna is rasa-raj, full of ecstasy, infinite ecstasy; and Radharani, maha-bhava She draws out that ecstasy, for Herself and for the world.

In Caitanya-caritamrta, Ramananda Raya answers Mahaprabhu:

*sukha-rupa krsna kare sukha asvadana  
bhakta-gane sukha dite ‘hladini’ karana*  
(Caitanya caritamrta, Madhya 8,159)

“Lord Krsna tastes all kinds of transcendental happiness, although He Himself is happiness personified. The pleasure relished by His pure devotees is also manifested by His pleasure potency (hladini-sakti ).”

Radharani represents a particular potency, known as hladini. She is the main ‘extracting machine’ of that rasa from Krsna, and She distributes it to the world outside. The highest quality of rasa, of ecstasy, is drawn by Her, from that dynamo of all rasa, Krsna, and is spread outside, distributed to others outside. It is due only to Her, that others may hope to have the taste of any of that transcendental juice.

As much as we surrender to Sri Gauranga, as much as we are percolated by His energy, His instruction, automatically we shall find that we are placed in that highest position, in Her divine service. Otherwise, such a thing is very, very difficult to attain by direct approach. Many sorts of misgivings will come and pollute us. But if under proper guidance we go through, we can pass through, the instructions of Sri Gauranga, then our approach to that highest position of service will be the easiest, and our gain will be of the maximum degree, and of the very purest character. Gauranga is the Ocean of Mercy, and Kulia, where Sri Caitanya Saraswat Math now stands, is called aparadha-bhanjana-patha, the place where Gauranga gave general absolution to all the sinners. Anyone who came for His mercy here, it was granted:

*kulia-gramete asi sri-krsna-caitanya  
hena nahi, ya’ re prabhu na karila dhanya  
(Caitanya Bhagavat, Antya 3,541)*

After five years of His sannyasa, when Mahaprabhu came back just once to visit Navadvip, He came to this place; and at that time, He was the most liberal in giving His highest mercy to all the most desirable service, service of the sweetest type, as found in Vrndavan. And after this, He left Navadvip, never to return.

**Devotee:** You have given such a high standard, pure standard, for us to follow...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** If you feel that, then, I think, you are fortunate. And if I can know, if I am able to sincerely know such things, to have a touch of such type of high and divine knowledge, if I am able to receive all these things of such a standard from my Guru Maharaj, then I consider myself also fortunate, very fortunate.

In Manu-samhita is given the answer to the question “What is dharma?”:

*vidvabhih sevitaḥ sadbhir, nityam advesa-ragibhih  
hrdayenabhyānujñato, yo dharmas tam nibhodhata*

Those who are well versed in revealed scriptures, they know, and they serve, the real dharma, real religion. And what should be the symptoms of those sadhus? They are established in revealed truth; and they themselves are approved, by the true sadhus.

Then who is sadhu? That is told in this verse: advesa-ragibhih, who has got no sympathy for, or apathy, aversion to, all the achievements we are in the midst of in this world. This must be a symptom of the sadhu; they can know, and from them, we may know, what is dharma.

Also, hrdayenabhyānujñato, the evidence of the heart: the heart will approve, from its innermost quarter: “Yes! Here I am getting satisfaction...” That is also evidence, proof, of the real standard of dharma, of religion. The heart’s response: “Yes, this is what I am searching for; I am searching for such things...” The heart will say this, from within.

Prahlada Maharaj advises:

*na te viduḥ svartha-gatim hi viṣṇum  
durasaya ye bahir-artha-maninah  
ndha yathandhair upaniyamanas  
te ‘pīṣa-tantryam uru-damni baddhah*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 7,5,31)

He says that we are making too much of the covering of reality, we are devoting our minds to the external coating bahir-artha-maninah but we do not dive deep into the eternal substance. If only we were to dive deep into reality, there we would find Viṣṇu. The most peaceful substance is within, but it is covered, just as milk is covered by cream, and we are making much of that cover. The real substance is within, just as fruit is covered by its skin. What we experience at present is the cover, the skin, and we are making much of that, ignoring the very substance which the cover is protecting.

So, when we get these things from our Gurudev, and from Mahāprabhu, we think “Oh, yes! These are heart-satisfying things.” And we will find such things through progressively eliminating the external things, eliminating them all.

Progress means this process of elimination and acceptance: elimination of the lower, and acceptance of the higher. It is progressive, and dynamic; at each stage of our progress we will find, "Yes, this is what I am really searching for" further, and further, progressively.

**Devotee:** Was it here in this area, in Kulia, that Jagai and Madhai were forgiven?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** No, that was on the other side of the Ganges. Some say that Jagai and Madhai were absolved just near here, at Haritolla; but we are to understand, from Bhaktivinode Thakur, that it was on the other side, in Mayapur.

### **Nityananda Prabhu's mercy**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Nityananda Prabhu is the most merciful, even to the offenders. His nature is of a peculiar type, a special type, such that whom even Mahaprabhu is rejecting, He is keeping them, giving them assurance: "No, no, don't be hopeless..." Nityananda Prabhu's mercy was shown in this way in the pastime of Mahaprabhu and Kala-Krsna dasa.

Kala-Krsna dasa was accompanying Mahaprabhu on His journey in south India, and there he did something wrong: he left Mahaprabhu's personal association, enticed by the Bhattatharis, the gypsy women. This occurred in south Kerala, Karnataka, the place of Madhvacarya. The people of that province, both men and women, are reputed to be very beautiful. Their complexion is very good, as well as their features and their figures; Gandhi referred to that place as the 'land of the fairies'. And Kala-Krsna dasa was enticed, and left Mahaprabhu's association.

That even in the direct company of Mahaprabhu, Kala-Krsna dasa was deviated from Him, he could be taken away, is certainly also for our instruction. But utilising His special power, Mahaprabhu rescued Kala-Krsna dasa from the gypsies' camp; and later, after taking him to Jagannath Puri, Mahaprabhu released him from His service, saying "He is of such nature; but, anyhow, I have taken him from the hands of those villifiers. Now I release him, he may go

anywhere." But Nityananda Prabhu utilised Kala-Krsna dasa, He again gave him service: "Go to Saci devi and inform her that Mahaprabhu has arrived in Puri safely after two years tour in the south country. Mahaprabhu's safe arrival give this news to Saci devi." Despite Mahaprabhu's rejection, still Kala-Krsna dasa was utilised, by Nityananda Prabhu.

When I was preaching in Madras there was a similar case which I can remember. Myself and Hayagriva brahmacari ( later he became Sripad Madhava Maharaj) were preaching there, and we sent one boy to the Madras Centre of Gaudiya Math. He was staying there and serving, as a brahmacari, but then he became misguided. Sripad B.P. Tirtha Maharaj, who was at that time quite elderly, was in charge of the Math there, and he punished that fallen brahmacari by ousting him, sending him away from the Math.

He managed to stay in some other place in the city, then, after Sripad Tirtha Maharaj had left Madras, that boy came to Hayagriva and myself, pleading: "You please give permission, let me stay in the Math." We told him, "Guru Maharaj is very soon coming here; at that time, you come..." Then when Guru Maharaj came, to officially open the new lecture hall, we put the case to him: "This boy came for service, but then he had to leave, for such a reason; but again now he wants to stay in the Math. We have told him, 'Guru Maharaj is coming, and you come at that time'; now, he has come, what to do with him?"

Then our Guru Maharaj, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, said: "Mahaprabhu did not take Kala-Krsna dasa after he was seduced by the Bhattatharis' showing him a lady, a girl. So, I can't accept him. But Nityananda Prabhu kept him, and gave him engagement. So you should keep him." A peculiar position we then found ourselves in! I thought: "Gurudev, you are all-in-all our leader, our unconditional Lord; you can't accept him, then how can we give him shelter, being under your guidance?" That was a puzzle: "How can we do it? If you can't accept, then how can we?" But Guru Maharaj has said, "I can't accept him; but you should keep him...." And we had to adjust with that.

From this we can trace the line of benevolence and causeless mercy. The line of causeless mercy is extending from the Centre, but the extension gets the more intense position: "Go to see the mercy department, take yourself there; perhaps, there is some arrangement to help, to accept you..." Just as in a hospital, the general department disappoints the patient: "No, we can't accept such patients as you here. But, you may try the other department. There, you will find more

accommodation". And after going there and checking, the patient finds them to be of such type: "Here we can accept all. There is arrangement for you." In this way we find the servants are more benevolent, more even than their Lord. It is inconceivable.

In seeing the mood of humility as expressed in different ways by Krsnadas Kaviraj Goswami and Vrindavan das Thakur, I also came to some revolutionary understanding about this.

While writing Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Kaviraj Goswami has expressed so much humility, humility of such a degree, that he says "My position is the worst; I am a sinner far worse than Jagai and Madhai, I am lower than the worm in the stool. If anyone hears my name, his merit will be diminished; and if anyone speaks my name, he commits sin such kind of wretched person I am. But the grace of Nityananda Prabhu has taken me up from such a nasty pit, taken me to Rupa-Sanatana, to Raghunatha das, and to divine Vrindavan.

I should not proclaim this, I should not speak in such a way, that "I have got something" but if I do not say so, then it will show ingratitude to Nityananda Prabhu, I would be a traitor to Him. So I shall have to say, to admit, "I have got something"; and that is by the grace of Nityananda. It is all His property, His grace, otherwise there is nothing, no worth at all in me." With so much humility Kaviraj Goswami is approaching the public and appealing to them to come to Gaura-Nityananda.

But Vrindavan das Thakur, in his writing, says, "I appeal most fervently and with the greatest humility to you all: accept Nityananda and Sri Gauranga! You'll get the best benefit of your life. This I urgently beg you, with the utmost humility, with a straw between my teeth. But if such appeal of mine fails, and if still you want to put blame on Nityananda-Gauranga, then I just kick you! I kick such a person, demoniac person."

*eta parihare o ye papi ninda kare  
tabe lathi maron ta'ra sirera upare*  
(C. Bhag. Madhya 11:63)

"If in spite of hearing the glories of Nityananda, one blasphemes Him, then I kick the head of such a sinful person."

To this, the ordinary commentators will say, "Kaviraj Goswami and others, they

are humiliating themselves so much, they are appealing in such a humble way. But this Vrindavan das! What kind of egoistic fellow is he? He says, he kicks those who do not come to hear his Gaura-Nityananda. He'll kick them! Such a boast, so proud he is he a Vaisnava? Is this type of person a Vaisnava? Trnad api sunicena, taror api sahisnuna: more humble than straw, more tolerant than a tree is he of this type?"

This is how Vrindavan Thakur's statement is met by the ordinary thinkers; but not long after joining the Gaudiya Math, I heard a revolutionary remark from our Guru Maharaj, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, in which we find a most peculiar meaning or explanation. He said: "For those who had no chance, no possibility of entering into devotional service, by this statement Vrindavan Thakur has created a path. For those who had no chance of getting any service, Vrindavan Thakur has made that chance by kicking them." How is it so?

Guru Maharaj explained, "Vrindavan Thakur has pronounced such a bold expression against those unbelieving persons to wound their feelings, so that Krsna will come to their aid. Just as, if any attendant or son of a gentleman does wrong to some other person, then that person's guardians will come to help their dependent: "Oh, what he has done to you, don't mind it; look here, I am giving something to you be pleased, and go on, happily..."

So, because Vrindavan Thakur has in such an ostentatious way apparently committed some wrong against that particular unbelieving section, it will draw Krsna's attention; Mahaprabhu's special attention will be drawn towards them, that "My son has done something wrong, some damage to you; don't take it badly, but forgive and forget now, I am giving something to you, come..."

In this way Vrindavan Thakur has made a new path, by threatening the unbelievers in Gaura-Nityananda; by his strong remark of very abusive character, he has given the chance to those fellows to draw the greater and more special attention of the authority.

**No influence of mortality**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The soul is a particle of consciousness, he is endowed with free will. Eliminating free will, only gross matter remains. Without independence, the soul could not progress from bondage to liberation, and his ultimate salvation would be impossible. But his spirit of exploitation is a foreign force, an intoxicant; a miscalculation that surrounds his independence.

Life's objectives may be scientifically analyzed as threefold: exploitation, renunciation, and dedication. The most common tendency is found in those engaged in exploiting other persons, species, or elements, for mundane sense enjoyment. Such persons desire to materially elevate themselves in the present environment, and thus they are described as elevationists. A more sober class discovers the severe equal and opposite reactions to worldly pursuits (karma), and they engage in renunciation of the world in search of equilibrium. They hope to escape the world's concomitant reactions and sufferings. Thus their goal is liberation, and they are known as Salvationists or liberationists. But if we dive deeply into the revealed scriptures, it will be apparent that the pursuits of both exploitation and renunciation are not only fruitless, but injurious to real progress.

The normal, wholesome, and happy plane is in the life of dedication. Without exploiting or borrowing anything from the environment, and without attempting to artificially renounce it, one who is sincere to dedicate himself naturally comes into contact with a higher and more subtle plane of life. By his readiness to give and serve, he will attain to a higher society and achieve appropriate guidance. The enjoying spirit forces one to be associated with a lower section to control and enjoy. And the renouncing spirit allures even the scholars with its "prestigious" superiority over exploitation. Thus it is more dangerous, just as a half-truth is more dangerous than falsehood. As it is difficult to awaken someone from the deepest possible sleep, the liberationists may remain for incalculable time within their cell of non-differentiated liberation. But the higher existence will invite the service of one who desires to purely dedicate himself without remuneration.

Service, dedication, is the summum bonum of the teachings of the Vaishnava school, the third plane of life where every unit is a dedicating member in an organic whole. In such a normal adjustment, everyone mutually assists one another in their service to the center, the higher recipient, the highest entity. Everything is existing to satisfy Him. If this were not the case He would not be

the Absolute. God is the prime cause of all causes, and everything exists for Him, to satisfy Him.

A barren conception of mere "deathlessness" cannot afford us any knowledge of a positive thing, but only freedom from the negative side. If immortality means "no influence of mortality," what, then, is its positive conception? What will be the nature, movement, and progress of that which is immortal? Without this understanding, immortality is only an abstract idea. Because it does not appear to exhibit the symptoms of death, stone would be "more immortal" than human beings, and conscious entities would be "mortal," forever denied immortality! What, then, is the positive conception of immortality? How are the immortal "immortal"? What is the positive reality in immortality?

How can one become immortal? One must search out his intrinsic location in the universal order. It will not do to attempt to solve only the negative side of life which is full of suffering - birth, death, infirmity, and disease. We should know that there exists a conception of life worth living for. This positive side has been almost totally neglected in most general religious views.

For instance, the Buddhist theory is that after liberation, nothing remains. Buddhists crave absolute extinction of material existence. And the Shankarite monist theory of liberation is to lose one's individuality by "becoming one" with the non-differentiated aspect of the Absolute. They postulate that when the triad of seer, seen, and seeing, or knower, knowable, and knowledge culminate at one point, the triad is destroyed and nothing remains. This is a vague area of "negative immortality." The "oneness" in which the perception of individuality is obscured is a marginal or "buffer" state midway between the material and spiritual worlds.

Composed of innumerable souls, it is an immortal plane devoid of specific variegatedness. It possesses positivity only in the sense that it is a plane of existence, a background, but in itself it lacks a positive development of variegated existence. The nature of the background is oneness, and development woven over it necessitates plurality or a differentiated nature.

Thus, the "immortality" of the impersonalistic schools such as the Shankarites and others offers no positive life. But in Vaishnavism, immortality is a positive, dynamic existence. Above the non-differentiated Brahman aspect of the absolute, the transcendental variegated experience begins. Situated there in the

spiritual plane is the positive Kingdom of God.

Transcending the vague areas of "negative immortality" that the impersonalists aspire for, the devotees — the Vaisnavas dedicate themselves to the life of eternal devotional service to the Supreme Lord of the transcendental realm. Although the soul can maladopt himself to a fallen state of existence in the planes of exploitation and renunciation, he is inherently adaptable to the positive life in the Kingdom of God. Positive immortality is possible only for the surrendered. All others are necessarily mortal. Only those who have wholly given themselves to the center are living in eternity.

With a broad vision, we must know ourselves as created of smaller stuff, and thus only with assistance from above can we improve our situation and achieve a position in the higher plane. A submissive, serving attitude is necessary. If we submit, the universal authoritative aspect of the Absolute will take us upward to a higher prospect. He is the autocrat, the absolute knowledge, the absolute good: everything about Him is absolute. Being in a vulnerable position as we experience in this world, why then should we not submit to Him? The road to the sphere of transcendence is the deductive or descending method. We can reach the absolute good, the absolute will, by His consent alone.

Only by faith in absolute surrender is anyone allowed entry into that domain; never by "exploration," by "colonization," or by attempting to become a "monarch" there. No inductive or ascending method such as renunciation or ordinary yoga can compel Him to accept us. Whosoever He chooses can alone reach Him. Although the highest point of the renunciates is desirelessness or freedom from possessiveness, the surrendered soul is naturally desireless. Detachment is only the negative side of surrender, and above selflessness, the devotee surrenders himself to the higher substance, and this is what it means to be awake in another world, another plane of life. Such is the positive Vaishnava conception of life — to determine one's real self beyond the jurisdiction of the world of misconception.

The nature of progressive substance is eternal existence, knowledge, and beauty. The one harmonizing organic whole contains similarities and differences, held inconceivably in the hand of the Absolute. And there is no anarchy in the absolute power. Nonetheless, mercy is found to be above justice. Above judiciousness the supreme position is held by love, sympathy, and beauty: "I am the absolute power, but I am friendly to you all. Knowing this you need never

fear" (Bhagavad Gita 5.29). This revelation relieves us of all apprehension: we are not victims of a chaotic environment, but it is judicious and considerate, and the ultimate dispenser is our friend.

Surrender is the foundation of the world of devotion. It is the very life and essence. One cannot enter into that domain without surrender. It must be present in every form of service, and to attempt divine service without it will be a mere imitation or a lifeless formality. The entire gist of the Vedic instruction is to dedicate oneself to the service of the Godhead. Without surrender, the activity will be adulterated with exploitation, renunciation, artificial meditation, and so on.

By constitution the soul is the Lord's servant, and the Lord has the right to do anything according to His sweet will. If accepting this truth we undertake devotional practices, only then will our activity be devotional. The activity of the self-dedicated soul alone can be called devotion. Sincere prayer will help us to seek the help of the Lord, but again, prayer in the spirit of surrender can alone reach Him. The path of devotion entails inviting the positive to descend and embrace us: "I am very low and You are so high. You can purify me for Your higher purpose. Be pleased. Otherwise I am helpless." It is impossible to take Him captive in the cage of our knowledge.

Only the way of devotion can help us. In every respect He is high, great, and infinite; and we are comparatively small. His mercy, His sympathy, love, and grace are the only medium through which we can come to know Him. And cultivating good faith in that autonomous sweet land which is so high, we will earnestly hope and pray to be associated with the Absolute as His devotee; and that will bring our happy prospect for the future.

### **Our freedom is covered by so many conditions**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** He is wonderful. In the example of Vamana-avatara it is told of His "Wonderful Stride" – *adbhutkrama*. With one stride He covered the whole earth and with the next He captured the whole of heaven. He then needed

a place to put His third step, but where? He is adbhutkrama. He, of wonderful stride – all His steps are wonderful. He is wonder personified – the source of all wonder to our tiny brain.

He is here, He is also everywhere. With His full representation He is everywhere and yet He is nowhere! Everything is in Him and nothing is in Him!

Krsna says to Arjuna, “Try to understand My peculiar position.” He is the Mystery of all mysteries. Even our own soul is astonishing to our worldly experience.

*ascaryavat pasyati kascit enam, ascaryavad vadati tathaiva canyah  
ascaryavac caiman anyah srnoti, srutvapy enam veda na caiva kascit*  
Bhagavad-gita 2.29 “

We do not even know the extraordinary nature of our own self. It is of a very high order.” But our attention is focused toward so many mortal things. We have been introduced to and captured by the meanest aspects of this world. This is the consequence of the mood of enjoyment.

We want to enjoy, we want to exploit – a good exploiter is a king to us. But exploitation in itself is degrading, very mean and low. It takes us to the lowest position and makes us victims of a great reaction.

Exploitation and enjoyment – we are in the midst of them and we do not know anything, cannot think of anything but enjoyment. We want to understand anything and everything in terms of enjoyment. We are in such a filthy degraded position: only, “enjoyment, enjoyment” – that is exploitation. But to exploit is the meanest type of nature. It is hateful and we must get out of the clutches of that ghost of exploitation.

There is another ghost – renunciation, idleness. But the noble thing is dedication – a dedicated life. There are two ghosts – one of renunciation; and the other of exploitation. We have to get out of that nightmare, that mania which is based on our tendency to measure things to be good or bad. In exploitation there is division into regular and irregular, or dharma and adharma. And then there is renunciation.

So many great stalwarts of that conception recommend a complete cessation of the dynamic life. A dead stop: but that should not be the prospect of any conscious man. A dead stop to life – is that any goal of life for the saner section?

A life of nobility, a life of dedication, not ordinary dedication for the environment but to the Highest Good, the highest form of life. In the lower stage dedication is calculated; in the higher stage spontaneous, automatic, dynamically incalculable instantaneous flow!

Real joy is there. Joy resides there in quality and quantity, in every way, real life is there. Life is there and here it is casting the worst shadow, a perverted reflection. Yet we are told, uddhared atmanatmanam, the key is in our own hand. The freedom by which we can associate with anything good or bad and reap the accorded result is in our hand.

How is it so? We are parched for freedom and yet the key is in our hand? Ultimately, we are told that the key is in our own hand. No one else is to be blamed for our present condition. But there is always the possibility of noble help being extended to us, and we must accept that. Our past actions also influence us a great deal – whether they were good, bad or of the eternal aspiration – sukrti. But ultimately, the possibility of free action is not taken away from us at any stage – even if we are reduced to the level of taking birth as a tree!

There also, the freedom is within. It is hard to think that a tree has got independence – free will – but it is there, in a suppressed state. Freedom is within us also. We may try as far as possible to understand how it is so. Because our freedom is covered by so many conditions, we may think that we are not free – that we are forced by circumstances – it may seem so. Still, we are free for our selection of any path – good or bad. Our existence is very small and so, our freedom is also small and meagre. But it is there. Though almost negligible, still, it is – it exists.

## **Our inner Treasure**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:**“O Holy Name! The tips of the toes of your lotus feet are eternally worshipped by the glowing effulgence of the Upanisads, the crest

jewels of the Vedas. You are eternally adored and chanted by great liberated souls like Narada and Sukadeva Goswami.

O Harinama! Clearing myself of all offences, I take complete shelter of You.” Rupa Goswami says that so many liberated souls worship the Holy Name of Krsna, offering their respects from all sides. He explained that the greatness of the Holy Name may not be found in the ordinary scriptures, but if you study all of them as a whole, you will find the very spirit of the Holy Name. Ordinary people may not find this in their study but there are those who can collect the real substance, the real purpose from those vast writings and detect the greatness of the Holy Name as the whole purpose of all the main Vedic scriptures. The principal codes in the Sruti, the Vedas, are giving hints about the Holy Name of Krsna. Sruti means sabda: that which can be grasped by the ear, the sound form of the revealed truth which has descended from above.

The Vedas naturally tell us that we can approach the supreme reality only through sound. Otherwise they would be suicidal. If they do not say that by sound only we will attain the truth, then what is the necessity of the Vedas which are only embodied sounds? So if we can trace their real characteristic we shall find that the principal Vedas say that by the cultivation of sound we can attain the Lord. So we can come to understand this only through sound.

Sound alone can deliver reality. The Vedas must say so, otherwise they will only be an ineffective jungle of sounds. Sruti means that which can be received through the ear and that sound is Absolute. The Srutis have come to declare to us that through sound alone we can attain the highest end. The main codes of the Sruti inform us: nikhila sruti mauli ratna mala. Mauli means the principal scriptures. They are like so many gems or jewels, forming a necklace. Just as while performing arati, we offer a lamp to show the Deity form of the Lord more clearly to the ordinary people, the principle Srutis are helping us to have this perception: by sound only we can have the Supreme Lord. Rupa Goswami says that if we are more attentive to their meaning, we will find that the principal Srutis are only trying to show us the lotus feet of the Holy Name, just as during arati the ghee lamp helps us to see the figure of the Lord. We may have a general view of the Deity, but with the help of the lamp, we can have a particular conception of the different parts of the body of the Lord. Similarly, we find that the principal Srutis with their light are trying to show us the lower portion of the Holy Name of Krsna. They are leading us and helping us to have a conception that the Name is everything.

Rupa Goswami says that those who are really liberated are all surrounding the Holy Name and offering praise and adoration. And he prays, “In this spirit, I take refuge in the Holy Name of Krsna.” Rupa Goswami says that only a superficial study of the Vedas will frustrate us. But if we search with a positive mind, by the grace of the Sadhus, the Acharyyas, and the Mahajanas, we will find that the principal Srutis are leading us towards the conception that the whole object of all the Vedic sounds is that central sound: the Holy Name of Krsna. There are so many sections of the Vedas that have come to distribute the tidings of the Absolute realm, but there must be a centre. So, the principal sounds are all emitting light like a torch, to show us that they have a central sound which represents the supreme whole, and that is Krsna.

So many liberated souls are all around, offering their respects to the Name of Krsna, that central sound from which all Vedic mantras have come to give us some idea of the sound aspect of the Absolute centre. This is Rupa Goswami’s argument. The branches of the Vedas are all sounds, and so many sounds must come from a central position. They cannot but direct one who has a proper eye towards that fountainhead of sound, saying “Go! Run towards that direction! In our course you will find everything. We are all partially representing so many things but we have a centre, we have a fountainhead. Go in that direction and you will find the sound that can sufficiently satisfy you, and you may also be introduced to other aspects of that sound.” The Holy Name of Krsna is most important; it is no less than Krsna Himself. It fully represents the whole. Rupa Goswami says, “O Holy Name, I take refuge under Your lotus feet. You are the grand, central sound who has given cohesion to all the sounds in the revealed scriptures.”

### **Sri Rupa Goswami – Namastakam 1**

The chanting of the Holy Name of Krsna cleanses the mirror of the heart and extinguishes the fire of misery in the ocean of birth and death. At that time, real auspiciousness begins for the soul. Just as the evening lotus blooms in the moon’s cooling rays, the heart begins to blossom in the nectar of the Name, and at last the soul awakens in full knowledge of its real inner treasure – a life of love with Krsna in the highest mellows of devotion. Again and again tasting nectar, the souls dive and surface in the ever-increasing ocean of joy. In this way, all phases of the self are fully satisfied and purified by bathing in the nectarine mellows of the Holy Name of Krsna. Therefore, let the Sankirtan of the Holy Name be victorious. (This verse is explained as follows in “Golden Volcano of

Divine Love.”)

What are the different stages through which we will pass while chanting the Holy Name of Krsna? The first stage is that it cleanses the mirror of the mind. If the mirror of the mental system is covered with dust, we cannot see things clearly and scriptural advice cannot be properly reflected there. What are the different kinds of dust covering the mind? Our infinite fleeting and organised desires are considered to be dust, and our heart and minds are covered with layers and layers of this dust. Therefore we cannot see things properly; they cannot properly reflect in our mind because it is covered with the infinite ordinary desires of this mundane world. So the first effect of Sri Krsna Sankirttan is the cleansing of the mind. The first instalment of Nama-sankirttan gives us the end result of varnasrama-dharma: purification of the heart and mind. Then we can understand Vedic advice properly.

The next effect of chanting the Holy Name is that it extinguishes the fire of material existence in the forest of repeated birth and death. WE are forced to come into creation and again die. The mundane wave catches the soul which mingles with that vibration in different stages. That is stopped by the second effect of Sri Krsna Sankirttan and we become liberated. With the first stride, the intelligence is purified. With the second stride, the Holy Name effects liberation from the great conflagration of threefold miseries. The threefold miseries are, adhyatmika (miseries within the body and mind such as disease and mental anxiety), adhibhautika (miseries from our neighbours, man, beasts, insects and so many other living beings), and adhidaivika (natural catastrophes like famine, flood and earthquake). We have to suffer from these three kinds of miseries which burn in our heart like fire. But everything is extinguished forever by the second stride of Nama-sankirttana which gives us relief from material existence.

The next stage is sreyah-kairava candrikavitaranam: the Holy Name bestows upon us the supreme goal of life. After doing away with these two negative engagements, our positive engagement begins and ultimately takes us to reality, to the real truth, which is eternal, auspicious and beautiful. It takes us to that auspiciousness which is above this world of difficulty and in a general way we achieve the supreme goal, the highest auspiciousness, the great good, from chanting the Holy Name of Krsna. If we analyse this scrutinizingly, we find that in this stage the Holy Name takes us to an intimate personal relationship with Krsna, which includes neutrality, servitude, friendship and filial affection (santa, dasya, sakhya and vatsalya rasa). Sreyah covers the grace of Nityananda Prabhu,

for it is by His Grace that we may be allowed to worship Radha and Krsna in Vrndavan (nitaiyer karuna habe, braje radha krsna pabe.)

The next stage is vidya-vadhu-jivanam. The Holy Name prepares us for the wholesale surrender to Krsna that is found in conjugal love (madhura-rasa) where the devotees surrender themselves infinitely at the disposal of Krsna.

The next stage is anandambhudhi-varadhanam. When we come to the proper level while chanting the Name of Krsna, we find the transcendental ocean that is above all sorts of experience. The Name comes to assert Himself over us according to the degree of our surrender and when our surrender is complete, we feel a new type of ecstatic joy, we experience an infinite ocean of joy which is not static but dynamic. There we find new life and a new type of blissfulness. It never becomes stale or static, but at every moment gives us a taste of the infinite ocean of ecstasy.

The last effect is that our entire existence is purified. This kind of enjoyment does not pollute – it purifies. Enjoyment means exploitation. Mundane enjoyment creates a reaction and pollution attacks the enjoyer, but here, because Krsna is the aggressor, the result is purification. All enjoyment that comes from the centre, from the autocratic desires of Krsna, purifies us completely. In this verse the words sarvatma-snapanam mean that all different phases of the self which may be conceived are fully satisfied and purified at once by chanting the Holy Name of Krsna.

And there is another meaning of savatma-snapanam. If we praise Krsna congregationally, we will be purified according to our capacity. Both the singer and the audience as well as anyone who comes in connection with the transcendental sound, will be purified. Snapanam means purifying. The vibration of the Holy Name of Krsna purifies everyone and everything that comes in touch with it. After passing through so many conceptions and the charm of so many prospects, we have left them all behind and have come to the shore of the ocean and begin to swim in the waves of Nama-sankirttan, the nectar of the nectarine, by the grace of our Guru and the mercy of the Vaisnavas. It is their property and we are their slaves. We have such audacity to throw our body into this ocean of Nama-sankirttan and swim in that nectarine ocean (anandam-budhi-varadhanam).

Swimming in Radhakunda, the highest conception of spiritual attainment, can also be found in the highest form of Nama-sankirttan. This verse represents the

positive side of the unlimited ocean of Sri Krsna sankirttan. So Mahaprabhu says, “Go on with sankirttan, the congregational chanting of the Holy Name of Krsna.” Of course, sankirttan must be genuine, so association with saints is necessary. It is not an empirical attempt. We are attempting to have a connection with the higher unconditioned realm which can descend to help us here. We must have that connection with higher reality for that is all important. The Holy Name of Krsna is not mere physical sound, it is not lip-deep only, but it has a greater and higher aspect. It is all spiritual. We are in the marginal plane of existence, so some higher connection is necessary in order that the wave will descend from that higher realm and come to us and spread its influence outside as well.

Wherever it goes, the sankirttan of the Holy Name of Krsna will produce these sevenfold results. This is the purport of Mahaprabhu’s first verse. The first effect is that the Holy Name cleanses the souls which are attacked by the dirt of desires from the mundane world. By the second effect it gives mukti, liberation, perfect independence from material forces. The third effect brings real fortune – the opening of the soul’s treasure.

The innate resources of the soul are gradually awakened by the Holy Name of Krsna. Here Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu includes the other forms of relationship with the personal Absolute. In describing the next step, He takes the mood of conjugal devotion where one is absolutely disposed for Krsna’s enjoyment, unconditionally surrendering everything for His maximum pleasure. The next effect is the tasting of His ecstatic association. This has been taught to us by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who said, “Properly chant the Holy Name, the sound representation of Absolute sweetness.” Sri Krsna sankirttan is praised by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the inaugurator of the sankirttan movement who came as Radha-Govinda combined.

His advice is most valuable and necessary to tell us that with a sincere spirit we must come to join this Sri Krsna sankirttan, the most purifying transcendental sound which effects liberation, gives all fulfilment and grants us such a positive attainment that we lose ourselves in the ocean of joy and inconceivable sweetness. This is Srīman Mahaprabhu’s grace, and He proclaims, “Let Sri Krsna sankirttan be explained into this mortal world that it may benefit the whole world. It is all-comprehensive. It releases us from all sorts of troubles establishing us in the highest position of attainment.”

The following is a purport given by Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Maharaj of a

song by Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur.

“My heart is just like a desert, hot with the rays of the sun. This is my internal mental condition. The desire for mortal things cannot satisfy me because by nature they are death-producing. And not one or two, but thousands of such death-producing desires have taken shelter in my mind, so my subconscious region is always burning. This is my condition. But somehow by the grace of the sadhu or Guru, the Holy Name of Krsna with its infinite prospect has entered through the holes of my ears and reached the plane of my heart. And there, with some peculiar hope, with infinite auspicious possibilities, it touched my heart with a new kind of nectar. New hope is aroused by that sound. Then by force it comes from the heart towards the tongue, not that by the endeavour of my tongue I am producing that sound – no. What came from the heart of a saint through my ear entered my heart and that forcibly appeared upon my tongue and began to dance. That is the Holy Name proper. It descends from above. It cannot be produced by the material form of this tongue, its source is above. And through an agent of the Absolute it comes through the ear to the heart. From the heart it gathers some sympathy, then the Holy Name of Krsna forcibly appears upon the tongue and begins to dance. With great force it comes to the end of the tongue and that sweet sound begins its dancing.

The real effects of the Divine Name have been described here. If it is a real and living Name, the voice will be choked up, there will be shivering in the body and the legs will be unable to stand. Sometimes tears will flow in a current on the body and one's hairs will stand on end. Sometimes changes of colour will be found in the body and we will be unable to find any trace of the mind or consciousness. We may fall in a swoon, the whole body and mind will appear as if it is being attacked, shivering and influenced in different ways. Apparently it may seem that so many troubles are created in the body and the mind, but the real heart is overflowing with a particular kind of strange, sweet juice. Sometimes the devotee thinks, “I am in an ocean of nectar.” My whole existence is within an ocean of nectarine liquid. I am beside myself. I can't understand where I am. Where am I? What is this? What is all about me? It has almost made me mad. Am I a madman?

Where is my past experience, my seriousness, my gravity, where are they? What am I? I have been converted wholesale by a foreign thing. I am a doll in the hands of a great force which is also so affectionate to me. I can't ascertain how it is possible that by my faith I have entered this great unknown environment,

inexperienced before. And at last I find that I am captivated. My entire being, within and without, has been captured by a particular sweet force. I can't help being prey to such a sweet power. I can't give any proper description of this. I came to take shelter under Him and accept Him as my guardian, now at His hand I am being dealt with in such a merciless and despotic way. Still, I feel that everything is very pleasing, beyond my experience. What is this? I can't resist any more, I am fully captured. Let my fate go anywhere. I can't come out. I am a captive in the hand of a sweet friend. My whole independence is gone. There is no way left to me but to surrender. I am unable to describe my real position. I find that He's an autocrat. Whatever He likes to do, He will do. Since it is not possible for me to give any resistance, I must surrender. Let me also co-operate with whatever He is pleased to do, otherwise what can I do? I am helpless."

Sometimes I find that the sweetness of the Name is condensed like a blossoming flower and very wonderful streams of sweet current are flowing from it. The Holy Name contains so many sweet variegated forms of current within Him and He is wonderfully expressing Himself in different ways. Sometimes He emanates a peculiar type of colour and figure and disappears. So many charming aspects are shown as if to my eyes within, and He forcibly takes me to surrender at the foot of that altar, shows Himself in His full-fledged form In Vrndavan, in His braja-lila with Radharani and He takes me there.

I find that I am in the midst of His peculiar very sweet and loving paraphernalia. And He says, "You see! I have so many wonderful things. This is your home. I am not merely imagination, but concrete reality. You will find here that the environment is very favourable and sweet. You are to live here." I see there that He is dealing in different ways with His associates in different rasas. And I find that I have another body that has emerged from my previous one and that has a permanent place here in His service. Such a new life I find here. And then I find ultimately that all consideration of my past life and experience has vanished. And it is true – my real life is here. This is proper and that was a sham, that life has vanished.

Then I find that chanting the Holy Name gives me new encouragement, a new prospect and new hope. Whatever we want, whatever is our internal demand, it is supplied by the Name. If we take the Name, all our internal hankerings will be fulfilled. It is eternal, it is the purest of the pure and it is full of ecstasy. Now I find I have been completely converted. Now my innermost hankering is this – let whatever is against this sweet Name vanish eternally from the world. If anything

is in opposition to this sweet life, let it vanish and if necessary, I will give my life to make it disappear from the world forever. Then others will be able to enjoy it at their free will. No hindrance should come to that fulfilment of life, it has no other second. So everyone may come here and if necessary I will sacrifice myself to finish any opposition, so that all can smoothly, peacefully and without any danger enjoy this Absolute, sweet and blissful life.”Sri Kalyana Kalpataru Vol. 1 no. 4

## **Place of Solution**

Sri Nabadwip is considered by the high order devotees to be the highest place of theism of Absolute Love. Sri Radhika and Govinda combined Themselves together, and they are avowed to give their dearest thing to the public. As Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu They came here with this idea.

Both parties have the best wealth, and They have come to distribute that for the benefit of the public: “Come this way, you will get the highest thing that we taste ourselves. The same dish you can have. O people, you can have a taste of the same dish as we relish. It is the play of the highest order. Prem. Love.”

Raso vai sah: the Upanisads say that sweetness – rasa, anandam, sundaram – is really controlling the whole creation. Everyone wants rasa, none can say otherwise. From the atheists to the highest order of theist, everyone wants rasa.

If we can develop the eye to see, then every atom of Gaura-Dham will charm us to the utmost. Only the eye is necessary. By charm every atom is sufficient to engage us fully and accommodate us wholesale. One particle of dust can give us fullest engagement because all is infinite and of the most generous type here. All the dust is of the most generous type and promising for Krsna.

Every particle of dust promises to give us Radha-Krsna, so what more do we need? They all promise, and this is the outcome of Gaura-Dham. No other nature can be traced in them. They are all helping to take us to our highest attainment. Really seeing, it is their nature. Externally according to our anartha it may

produce so many tests and examinations, but with the least test and least trouble, they are ready to give our highest goal: the connection of Mahaprabhu, and the eye to see who Mahaprabhu is. The angle of vision is the most important thing, the angle of vision to look upon the environment.

In Vrndavan there are apparently so many demons such as Aghasura, Bakasura, Dhenuka, Vyoma, Arista, Kesi and Kamsa, but they are on the surface, whereas Krsna is everywhere. There is the superficial vision and the real vision. Similarly there is the internal self, and the necessity of that internal self – soul's necessity – avoiding the superfluous, the surface.

The surface is for our physical senses, and for the mind there is also a mental layer of different types of religionists including so many other religions. But in the layer of soul, when we come to appreciate assistance from others, then we will come to appreciate how beautiful and how magnanimous is the connection of Gauranga here in Nabadwip. How it can enrich our soul! Our soul's necessity.

## **Progress means quarrel**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Generally we are to think that we are not in perfect condition, so our differences will be due to our realisation, our degree of realisation. Everything varies, but the difference amongst the main principles that is deplorable and will cause disturbance to the newcomers. It is a great catastrophe for the newcomers.

They have come with open faith of a very mild standard, their faith is not so high, not so intense that they will be able to tolerate many things which seem to be like discord.

The difficulty is with them, so whenever such things are happening, generally the madhyama-adhikari Vaisnava should try to keep the beginners outside. They should not be allowed to enter into these discussions and differences, and the quarrel and litigation and all these things. This is only reserved for madhyama-

adhikaris

*laukiki vaidiki vapi yakriyakriyate mune  
hari-sevanukulaiva sa karya bhaktim-icchata*

"O great sage! If one aspires for devotional service one should perform all one's activities, whether they are mundane or Vedic, in such a way that is favourable for the service of Sri Hari." (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu, Purva-vibhaga, 2.93)

Whether it is social affairs or any sastric affairs and/or discussions, what is the real standpoint, what will be the real good, according to their stage they will try to argue. One says: "No, this will be good." Another says: "No, that will be better, this defect is there in your plan." Some quarrel may come even amongst the sincere souls. But still the kanistha-adhikaris (beginners), must not be allowed in that circle. Kanistha-adhikari, the stage of first training, cannot tolerate all these things. But still it is on the level of madhyama-adhikari.

We should use all our faculties in connection with Krsna consciousness. Love and laughter, we have to quarrel, sometimes we have to go to litigation, sometimes new differences in our realisations may come concerning the understanding of the proper meaning of the particular mantram or the scriptures, particular poem of the scriptures, many differences and discussions may arise. It is not undesirable, sometimes it is necessary.

*yat karosi yad asnasi, yaj juhosi dadasi yat  
yat tapasyasi kaunteya, tat kurusva mad arpanam*

"O son of Kunti, whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you offer in charity, and whatever austere vows you may keep - do everything as an offering unto Me." (Bhagavad-gita, 9.27)

"Good or bad, whatever is within you must be thrown for the object of My service." It may be adjusted in such way: I have got anger, that anger should be tried to be utilised in favour of the service to the Lord. Who has come to attack the devotees, I may use my anger against him. In this way try to make the best of a bad bargain. So many tendencies are in my mind and when I want transformation wholesale within my mental system I shall try to adjust them in such a way. In connection with divine service I shall try to utilize them in that stage. The diplomacy, diplomatic knowledge I have got, that also may be utilized for the service. In this way whatever one has got one may try to utilize that as

much as possible for the service of the Lord. In that way one will be able to purge them out very soon and very easily.

*yat karosi yad asnasi, yaj juhosi dadasi yat  
yat tapasyasi kaunteya, tat kurusva mad arpanam*

"O son of Kunti, whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you offer in charity, and whatever austere vows you may keep - do everything as an offering unto Me." (Bhagavad-gita, 9.27) And then:

*sarva-dharman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja  
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo, moksayisyami ma sucah*

"Totally abandoning all kinds of religion, surrender exclusively unto Me. I will liberate you from all kinds of sins, so do not despair." (Bhagavad-gita, 18.66)

Next higher stage. Then when there are very few impurities within you, you leave them, leave them all and become one with cetana, soul, brahma-bhuta prasannatma:

*brahma-bhuta prasannatma, na socati na kanksati  
samah sarvesu bhutesu, mad-bhaktim labhate param*

"The spotlessly pure-hearted and self-satisfied soul who has attained to his conscious divine nature neither grieves nor craves for anything. Seeing all beings equally (in the conception of My supreme energy), he gradually achieves supreme devotion (prema-bhakti) unto Me." (Bhagavad-gita, 18.54)

In the brahma-bhuta prasannatma stage, jnana-misra-bhakti, and yat karosi yad asnasi, that is karma-misra, and sarva-dharman parityajya, means from karma-misra to jnana-misra., and then real bhakti begins:

*jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva  
jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vartam  
sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanu-van-manobhir  
ye prayaso 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyam*

"Oh Lord, Oh Unconquerable One, those devotees who, completely giving up all attempts on the path of jnana of attaining the non-differentiated platform known as Brahma by hearing the transcendental narratives of Your pastimes, which

emanates from the lotus mouths of the maha-bhagavat sadhus and pass their lives by engaging their body, mind and words in pure devotion, easily conquer You (they easily get Your transcendental association), although You are the most difficult to attain in the three worlds." (Srimad-Bhagavatam, 10.14.3)

Only take the help of *ruchi*, taste. Whatever my condition may be, I have taste and I have got the connection with the sadhu, the taste will take me up very strongly and very safely to the right direction. Sadhu-sanga is all important. My taste is hearing from the lips of a real sadhu, where the real God consciousness has begun. My taste is for real God consciousness, Krsna consciousness. That is the most valuable thing. Then all will go away in no time and the taste will take me upwards.

Mahaprabhu says here: "It is the beginning. From other stages we may fall back." But if you've got real taste for real Krsna consciousness you are safe. That means Gaudiya Math: "Yes, it is the beginning of the real life of a real devotee, it is here."

All other qualifications, non qualifications, all are ignored. *Jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva jivanti san-mukharitam*, it is all above calculation. The faith has begun in its original form, in its real form here. Now faith has given shelter to this disciple and he's safe. Otherwise by calculation, by using our knowledge in drawing the comparison of the goodness of this world and that world, these are all very weak things, cannot be and are not reliable, but faith is real and faith has got its real characteristic. It must have a connection with a real sadhu and the devotee will find the inner taste there.

Here Mahaprabhu sanctions: "Yes, here it begins. The life of a devotee proper begins here. He has crossed the line of maya's influence." The calculation cannot be relied upon. Calculation can't help us to reach the proper place, but *sukrti* and *sraddha* will help us.,

*sakala chadiya bhai, sraddhadevira guna gai, yanra krpa bhakti dite pare*

(Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has written: "Giving up everything, let us sing in praise of *Sraddha-devi* - faith - whose grace can take us to Krsna.")

Firm faith, that is the most valuable thing to me, and neither knowledge nor energy, money, men, worldly wealth etc. Both energy and knowledge are futile. Only *sraddha*, faith, is our inner function. Why? Knowledge means doubt,

knowledge means in the background there is doubt, suspicion, elimination and acceptance, this is good - this is bad, this is the symptom for the badness and goodness, all is calculation. It is not automatic. In knowledge is the possibility of suspicion in the background: 'I will be deceived, I shall have to understand.' – means he lives in the plane of treachery atmosphere, he is suspicious. And he's to calculate and find out what is true and what is untrue, all these things. So he's living in the plane of suspicion, doubt, etc. Knowledge means that.

But in faith he has reached such a plane where no treachery exists, no room of any suspicion. In that country any suspicion is not to be found, because those that are living in that soil, they do not know what is cheating and deception. So simple dealings are there. Then we have come to the real side, where calculation is not necessary. Such a safe plane we have come to. So sakala chadiya bhai, sraddhadevira guna gai, when we have connection within us to faith, and also the genuine party, genuine party as my Guru, then this connection will be happiest for the soul.

Mahaprabhu says: "Yes, here it is. Now go further." Otherwise, eho bahya: "This is superficial. Go ahead, go forward." eho bahya, eho bahya, eho bahya, now here it is. Go, make further progress."

Jnana sunya bhakti, that is sraddha. And real sraddha cannot be exploited. Real sraddha will take us to a particular place. Sraddha, there is the guidance of the Supreme. None can seduce one who has got real sraddha. Through faith you will understand the real thing. Innate attraction, my heart feels very confident in him. And he may be an illiterate, may be a poor person devoid of all this worldly resources, but my heart will select his association automatically, a friend, a selection of friends. The heart will guide us surely to a proper sadhu. I may not know but that will seem to be very congenial to me, that company of devotees. So: na hi kalyaëa-krt kascid, durgatim tata gacchati: that is the greatest solace for us.

*partha naiveha namutra, vinasas tasya vidyate  
na hi kalyana-krt kascid, durgatim tata gacchati*

"O Arjuna, son of Kunti, the unsuccessful yogi does not suffer ruination either in this life or the next. He is not deprived of the pleasures of the heavenly planetary systems in this universe, nor is he denied the chance to personally see the Supersoul in the divine realm. This is so, O dear one, because a person who

performs virtuous actions never becomes ill-fated." (Bhagavad-gita, 6.40)

That ignorance cannot be in general, it is not ignorance proper but illiteracy or something like that. That cannot stand in our way. It is some other thing. A beast can approach, a scholar may only hate. It may happen this way.

So we need not to worry much. Still it is all undesirable, especially for the beginners, differences between the upper persons whom we consider to be upper rank. They're quarrelling and the lower class cannot but be disturbed. So they try to avoid as much as possible. At that time they may give their attention towards the scriptures. There is less quarrelling, but in scriptures there is also quarrelling, because they recommend advises of different stages, so there is also quarrel. Everywhere progress means quarrel. Elimination and acceptance, that means quarrel. One condemns another, progress means such. We can't avoid it altogether, but still the progress is there. We must not be afraid.

Gaura Hari bol! Gaura Hari bol! Gaura Hari bol! Gaura Hari bol

## **Pundarika Vidyanidhi**

**Devotee:** Guru Maharaj, I have one question. In caitanya-lila the Spiritual Master of Gadadhara Pandit is Pundarika Vidyanidhi. But what is Pundarika Vidyanidhi's position in Krsna-lila?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Gadadhara Pandit has been considered to be Radharani's incarnation; and Pundarika Vidyanidhi is considered to be Vrsabhanu-raj, the father of Radharani, in krsna-lila.

**Devotee:** Pundarika Vidyanidhi has such uncommon pastimes. They are very difficult to understand...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** He is paramahansa. Different devotees have come in this world, to show different type of bhajan. Bhajan is the common factor of

them all, of all such extraordinary devotees they are all fully devoted but they are showing themselves as different types, different models. So all are not one and the same. But their common end, Krsna consciousness that is to be considered, to be judged. From all positions, if one is directed totally towards Krsna consciousness, then he is well, he is properly situated.

Suppose there are many patients suffering from the same disease. The doctor may not advise everyone to take the same diet. It will be similar, but not the same; according to the taste and the capacity or condition of the stomach, one patient is given one thing, another something else. Similarly, the aim of those who are going towards Krsna consciousness is as one, but the physical arrangements may be little different. So in the case of the paramahamsas, devotees of extraordinary characteristic, their activities should not be considered, should not be judged in relation to the general standard of what is considered good and bad.

One example of this is Pundarika Vidyanidhi. Gadadhara Pandit in his youth was always very eager to see sadhus; so one day Mukunda asked him: “Would you like to go and see a sadhu, to visit him? I know of a good sadhu, I can take you.” “Yes, yes, take me to him!”

So Mukunda brought him there. And Gadadhara Pandit saw that Pundarika Vidyanidhi was sitting on a very soft bed with the finest covers, he was smoking an elaborately carved pipe, his hair was styled very beautifully and his clothes were of the most expensive style and cut. Gadadhara thought, “Oh! What sort of sadhu has Mukunda brought me to see?” He had some hesitation in his mind, some doubt. And Mukunda knew this, he could feel it. So he chanted one sloka from Srimad Bhagavatam:

*aho bakiyam sthana-kala-kutam  
jighamsayapayayad apy asadhvi  
lebhe gatim dhatry-ucitam tato ‘nyam  
kam va dayalum saranam vrajema*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 3:2:23 )

In this verse Uddhava is speaking to Vidura: “Whom should I worship, except Krsna? His magnanimity is so great, that when one lady, Putana, came to kill Him by poison, she was given the position as mother to Him, in His domain. Amongst those who are worshipable, He is the most magnanimous personality.

Whom shall I have as my worshipable Lord, greater than this?”

This sloka created some movement in the heart of Pundarika Vidyanidhi, and despite his external appearance, gradually something else began to show itself. Throwing away the valuable smoking-pipe, he began to shred his expensive clothing, and his bedding; he began to tear his well-decorated hair, and show many different kinds of extraordinary behaviour. Then he began to roll on the ground, his body in spasm stage; and words from that verse: ‘kam va dayalum... saranam vrajema... aho bakiyam...’ such sounds were coming intermittently from Pundarik’s mouth. Then Gadadhara Pandit thought: “Oh! Even a small sentiment, a tiny sentiment about the magnanimity of Krsna can produce so much revolution in his heart! So, he must be a great devotee...” In this way Gadadhara Pandit began to understand the dignity, the dignified position of Pundarik Vidyanidhi.

So, it is not always that ‘the man may be known by his dress.’ For Pundarika Vidyanidhi, his opulent appearance and activity is all only an outer showing, he does not care, he has no attachment for it to him, everything is one and the same. It is one and the same. He is only showing such a fashion, such an opulent fashion, externally, formally; but he is not a slave to those things to beautiful clothes, or hair, or any other such thing.

Similarly, it is told about Rajarsi Janaka: if he should have one hand on the soft breast of a lady, and another hand in the fire, there is no change, no disturbance in his consciousness. Both cases both enjoying and suffering are the same to him. Softness, and burning sensation, he is tolerating both. So, if a man who can tolerate the pain of fire-burning, puts his hand on the soft part of the lady, it is nothing to him. The inner man is otherwise engaged; the outward manifestation is only an external posture and it cannot affect him at all. It cannot touch him, cannot disturb him from his aim, from his engagement.”

## **Pure Devotion**

*bhidyate hrdaya-granthih, chidyante sarva-samsayah  
ksiyante casya karmani mayi drste 'khilatmani*

“Our inner aspiration for rasa, ecstasy, is buried within our hearts which are tied down and sealed. But hearing and chanting the glories of Krsna breaks the seal on the heart and allows it to awaken and open to receive Krsna – the reservoir of pleasure, ecstasy Himself.”

Here, Srimad-Bhagavatam is saying: “There is a knot within the hearts but that knot will be torn asunder by Krsna consciousness. At that time, the flow of our innate tendency for divine love (svarup sakti) will inundate the whole heart. When the knot of the heart is torn apart, then, as the sleeping soul awakens, the Goloka conception within will emerge and inundate his entire being.”

But this is apparently a difficult problem. How is it possible that all our doubts may be cleared? Is it possible for the finite to know everything? This statement seems rather inconsistent. It seems absurd. The Upanisads, however say: “Who knows Him, knows everything. Who gets Him, gets everything.” How will the finite know that he has everything, that he has known everything? It appears absurd, but it is confirmed in the scriptures. And if this problem is solved, then all problems are solved automatically. The finite will realize wholesale satisfaction; all his inquisitive tendencies will be satisfied. This is confirmed not only in the Upanisads, but also in the Srimad-Bhagavatam.

When I first came to the Gaudiya Math, I mixed very carefully with the devotees. I thought, “They say that what they teach is the only truth and that all else is tales – this is a bitter pill to swallow. They say, ‘Everyone is suffering from ignorance. And what we say is the right thing.’ I thought, “What is this! A sane man cannot easily swallow such a pill.” I also could not digest it so easily at first. But what they were saying was confirmed by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Srimad-Bhagavatam, Bhagavad-gita, and the Upanisads. All these authorities say, “Yes, it is so. If you know Him, everything is known. If you get Him, everything is gotten.”

Srimad-Bhagavatam (4.31.14), in a verse similar to the above line from the Upanisads, also says that all doubts are cleared by Krsna consciousness, and as a result, we come into real knowledge. There it is written:

*yatha taror mula-nisecanena  
trpyanti tat-skandha bhujopasakhah  
pranopaharac ca yathendriyanam  
tathaiva sarvarhanamacyutejya*

“By watering the root of a tree, all the leaves and branches are automatically nourished. Similarly, by supplying food to the stomach, all the limbs of the body are nourished. In the same way, if we satisfy the central conception of the Supreme Absolute, all our obligations are automatically fulfilled.”

If we put food into the stomach, the whole body is fed. If we pour water on the root of the tree, the whole tree is fed. In the same way, if we do our duty towards the centre, then everything is done. This is the greatness, the mysterious position of the absolute centre. He has control over the complete whole. This is the peculiar position of the centre in the system of the organic whole.

If a particular position of the brain is captured, then the whole body is controlled: one needle in that particular section of the brain, and all the functions of the body will be paralyzed. The peculiar position of the absolute centre is some thing like that. So the impossible becomes possible.

Suppose I am a poor girl who has nothing. Ordinarily it would not be possible to acquire anything. But if I marry a rich man who is the owner of a big property, I can have command over many things by my relationship with him. Although we may be poor, our relationship with a powerful master makes us the master of many things. In the same way, the Absolute Centre controls everything, and our affectionate relationship with Him may endow us with the command of many things. This is how it is possible for the finite soul to have possession of everything – through the subtle link of affection.

Through Krsna everything is possible. And the nearer we come to Him, the more we shall catch. His influence inspired His devotees, and all His qualities fill their hearts (*sarva maha-guna gana vaisnava-sarire, krsna-bhakte krsnera guna sakali sancare* – Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila, 22.75). In that way, although a devotee is not himself a master, through the link of love he can be master of anything. This is the line of thought explained by Srimad-Bhagavatam and the Upanisads.

Without having a real connection with the Absolute centre, your attempts to

know everything will be useless. If you try to know even a particle of sand, lifetimes will come and go, millions of lives will pass, and you will continue to analyze the sand, finding no end to understanding even one particle.

We are told “If you want to inquire – inquire about the centre.” That is the call of the Upanisads: “Don’t waste your time trying to analyze the smallest part of this creation, trying to be its master; it is not possible, Your inquiry should be properly guided.” Kṛṣṇa says, “I am the centre, and I say, ‘Come to know Me, and through Me you will be able to know everything because I know everything and I control everything. Your connection with Me can give you that capacity. Approach everything through Me. Then you will be able to know the proper position of all things. Otherwise you will become acquainted with only a partial aspect of reality and that will be external and incomplete. And you will pass millions of lives trying to know and understand reality to no end. Bhagavatam says:

*athapi te deva padambhuja-dvaya  
prasada-lesanugrhitā eva hi  
janati tattvam bhagavan mahimno  
na cānya eko ‘pi ciraṁ vicinvaṇ*

“Only one who is blessed with the mercy of the Lord can know His true nature. On the other hand, those who try empirically to understand His inconceivable glories can study and speculate forever without arriving at the proper conclusion.”

Here, through Bhagavatam, Kṛṣṇa tells us, “You may devote yourself for eternity in an erroneous direction, with no possibility of coming to the end of understanding. But if you try to approach the absolute centre, then in no time you will be able to know what is what.” That is the direction given by the Upanisads and Srimad-Bhagavatam, that is the direction we must take, and that is devotion.

It is so satisfying that once you have attained it, you won’t care to know any other thing. We need only concentrate on Kṛṣṇa’s service. Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.14.3) declares:

*jñāne prayasaṁ udapasya namanta eva  
jīvanti san-mukharitāṁ bhavādīya vartam*

*sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanu-van-manobhir  
ye prayaso 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyam*

“Hatefully giving up all intellectual attempts to understand the Supreme Truth, those who want to realize You should completely surrender unto You. They should hear from self-realized devotees about Your holy name and transcendental pastimes. Whatever situation they may find themselves in, they should progress by fully dedicating their mind, body, and words to You. In this way the infinite, who is never conquered by anyone, becomes conquered through love.”

We can approach the Supreme Lord only through submission, and when we achieve Him, we won't care for knowing anything else. We will have no regard for what is happening or not happening in the outside world. We will deeply engage in His service for His satisfaction. There, in His service, we will find the object of our lives fulfilled. And this external knowledge of “thing outside” will seem to us as rubbish. We will realize, “What is the necessity of wasting time with all kinds of calculation – the nectar is here! It is far deeper than what is found in the external plane. And at that time, we shall give all our attention to His service.

The question is often asked why varnasrama-dharma, the Vedic system of social stratification, was ignored by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and why it is that anyone from any social position is accepted by our devotional school. We have to cross over the constraints of the caste system (varnasrama-dharma), offering the results of our work to Krsna (krsna karmarpanam), devotion mixed with the desire to enjoy the fruits of work (karma-misra-bhakti) and devotion mixed with the desire of liberation (jnana-misra-bhakti). They have all been rejected by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. His slogan was “eho bahya age kaha ara:” “These things are external; go deeper, go deeper.” When Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu asked what is further and higher than all these different conceptions of theism, Ramananda Raya suggested jnana-sunya bhakti, unalloyed devotion. When this was suggested by Ramananda Raya, Mahaprabhu said, “Yes, here real theism begins.”

## Radha-dasya

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** When I was in Madras, Prabhupada's Vyasa Puja took place at the Caitanya Math in Mayapura. Professor Sannyal had written an article in English for the occasion. He wrote, "I do not know Krsna, but because you tell me that I am to worship Krsna, I do it."

I could not understand the meaning of this statement, the internal meaning. I could not help but wonder why he had said this. Three or four years later, an incident occurred at Radha Kunda that helped me to understand.

Paramananda Brahmachari came to Prabhupada and reported that the Diwan of Bharatpura State was circumambulating Radha Kunda by prostrating himself on the ground and slowly advancing by measuring the length of each successive prostration. Paramananda Prabhu told Prabhupada with much ardor, "They have so much esteem for Radharani!"

Prabhupada then came out from his inner quarters and said, "Yes, but their concern for Radharani and our concern for Radharani are quite different. They come to Radharani because She is Krsna's favorite; but our position is the opposite. We worship Krsna because He is Radharani's favorite. Our interest is in Radharani, and Krsna is Her favorite. And only because She wants Krsna do we have any connection with Him."

At that time I could not understand what Professor Sannyal had written. Then later I read that some jivas are born out of Baladeva's anga-jyoti, the brahmajyoti, the non-distinguishable divine effulgence. That is the source from whence some of us are born. Some have connection with Baladeva's anga-jyoti, but others originate from the halo of Radharani and Her group.

These souls have a direct connection with Radharani. She is their Mistress and they necessarily follow whatever She does. Prabhupada told us that we are really saktas, worshipers of God's potency; not saktas like the worshipers of Durga, but suddha-saktas. The real, original potency, Krsna's dedicating Moiety, is in Vraja. Both direct and indirect connections with Krsna come through Her. This is Radha's position. We heard all these things from Prabhupada.

This is also the significance of the sannyasa-mantra. In ordinary mantras, a direct connection with Kṛṣṇa is established, but in the sannyasa-mantra, our spiritual connection is shown to be with the gopis. That is Rādhā-dāśya, the service of Rādhikā. It is above Kṛṣṇa-dāśya. The purport, the gist of the sannyasa-mantra, is gopī-dāśya.

## **Raganuga-bhakti**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Pujala raga-patha gaurava bhange* – that is the motto of our Guru Maharaj. That is the property of our Gurudeva, and we are serving that from one step lower. But we must be conscious of the fact that the real wealth of my Gurudeva is raganuga-bhakti. That is our aim. “But I am not particularly fit. I am to acquire my fitness for this aim by the servants of those that are within raganuga-bhakti. I pray one day I will be able to reach that standard.”

” This should be our attitude, and if we think we are quite fit, then that is faulty. That progress will be indirect, not direct. Mahāprabhu says – na prema gandho’sṭi darapi. “

There is not a drop of real raganuga-bhakti within Me. That is infinite, that is an ocean. My attempt is a sham. It is artificial.” He is blaming Himself in such a way – but from the background it is known that *raganuga-bhakti* is filling Him up, capturing Him wholesale.

*Raganuga-bhakti* is the very life of prema, the internal, irresistible attraction for service to Kṛṣṇa. It is continuous, not calculative of any gain or loss. We are to pray for that. It has come in such an irresistible way and captured us. As the ocean plays with a straw, it shall also play with me in that way. That is bhakti. That is raganuga – that prema is an ocean of love. You will have no initiative at all – but that is not a curse, that ocean is a cosmos. Harmony is there, and we are all in His hand. Yoga-maya is making arrangements for all these things. We must look with a feeling of helplessness – we shall feel the emanation of the loving

service, *prema* – love divine.

I am not teaching raganuga-bhakti, but I am making it clear that it is our goal. We must have that on our head – *pujala raga-patha gaurava bhang*. We are worshipping this and our highest aim is raganuga-bhakti. With that object in mind we are doing work here in this world.

The different stages of development, *sambandha*, *abhidheya*, and *prayojana*, are also different stages of devotional service, like *vaidhi-bhakti*, *raganuga-bhakti* etc.

In *vaidhi-bhakti*, we generally see the constitutional position of the Master, the Master of the world. He is in cooperation with us, and we are guided by some law – that is Narayana in *Vaikuntha*. “This is a good thing, I get some special pleasure by His service. The *sastra* also encourages me to do this.” This sort of conclusion is held by the servitor in *vaidhi*. There is some awe, grandeur, and some apprehension that I may not do my service correctly – it is calculated devotion and calculated service.

But in *raga-marga* one’s service is spontaneous and automatic. “I am helpless – I can’t resist doing it.” That service is fully dependent, just as in the inner workings of the body, there is some voluntary action, and some reflexive involuntary action.

It is involuntary that when we eat something, the process of digestion is automatic – I can’t assist it. Without my consciousness the work is going on. So in *raga-marga*, it goes on without our calculated faculty – our voluntary faculty does not have much scope there. It must follow this internal, spontaneous energy which works there. Those in *raga-marga* cannot live for anything but to do their service. That is the position there. But it is not measured or calculated – it is automatic and spontaneous.

## **Real Faith and blind Faith**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** What is faith? We are incomplete without the Lord. The fulfilment of our lives is in the hands of the Absolute. That is faith. Everything is in the hand of the Absolute and we are nowhere. We are helpless, sincerely searching for our real shelter. The environment is all hypocrisy. We want a real shelter, as we are shelter-less. We have nothing to attract the Lord towards us. So, we must not live a hypocritical life. We have no qualification to attract anyone towards us.

Wholesale, we want to be utilized by the Lord. If possible, our energy is to be wholesale thrown at the disposal of some wonderful person who can utilize it.

This is faith proper which releases us from the clutches of Satan. Satan's self-advertising, self-aggrandizing energy as the anti-god is encouraging more Satanism in us such as the worldly ego, separatism and independent life. Satanism, the conception that we are masters, must be fully dissolved and discarded via disassociation.

We are nothing without the connection of that wonderful person. Someone may utilize us – some miraculous person! Some miraculous force may utilize me. We should not seek any separate self-interest that means surrender to Satan – the anti-god.

Everything is accomplished if I can submit to the centre or the central power of the Absolute. This means faith – this is called faith. We can make progress towards the Truth by faith and not by any other means – not through the senses, not with the intellect and not with our reason. Nothing can measure that substance except faith. We must ask ourselves, “Am I ready to depend only on that faith?”

In the beginning, we shall have to drive out the misconception of faith. That is, many people will say that, “Faith is superstition. What is faith? It is not something tangible.” Our civilization will accuse us, that we are required to be reduced to nothingness, to no worth – and this cannot have any good in it. This misconception of faith is blind. It is the worst type of superstition in our present civilization. But faith is such that we are nothing at present. Still, we can be utilized in our proper position, but we are far, far from that sort of position. The negative side always progresses and the foundation is sadhu-sanga, the association of devotees. It becomes possible to select the agents in proper company. In this attitude we can select the divine agents of a higher type. There

are different kinds of agents from different conception of so-called religion.

According to our faith, we shall select our well-wishers and agents. According to the classification of our faith, we will make progress on that side. So, faith means deep confidence in the central Absolute. Our association, our selection of the agents from that eternal source coming to help us, depends on our faith. We are like birds of the same flock – same feather. So, we are to recognize that feather, and then we shall associate with them. Then, dedicated action will begin by that association. He will be the teacher, and we shall be the student. Now the question is, “What kind of faith?”

There is a plane of exploitation, renunciation and dedication – service. The first, exploitation, may be easily eliminated. We are suffering from so many reactions and we can easily become disgusted with this exploitative, “elevationist” mentality. But then, the temptation of complete retirement in the renunciation school is staring us in the face. Many will flock there, “Oh, complete retirement. This world is not worth living for. We want to retire from here permanently.” Buddha, Sankara and others will come with their agents to try to take you to that plane of renunciation or retirement.

Then, there is the plane of dedicated life. I want to live, but not to renounce nor to exploit. Exploitation means to give pain to others. But I want to live without giving any pain to others, without any reaction. Dedication means self-sacrifice. Then, the question will come to give oneself to others. We shall try to give without taking, and this is safe when it has got connection with the Centre Who is the designer and destines everything. The connection with Him will then be something substantial. Otherwise, all is futile with no position at all. But in this way we are carried by that designer whose destiny resides in that conception of Autocracy as Krsna.

We shall then gradually see only love, affection and beauty present in the Autocrat and nothing else. He is a charmer who can charm by His beauty and by His behaviour. He is the only absolute Autocrat. Affection, love, beauty, harmony and sweetness is the Autocrat. If we can find Him in this way then we shall go to His side, but the process of going also depends on Him.

Selection will come from Him as we are nowhere, we are helpless. We are to increase our helplessness so much so that His agents will be attracted. They will come to recommend us. This will be substantial. We will always be conscious

that we cannot be masters of this land of exploitation. We are fully dependent on the Lord. If anything is given to us for food, we shall take it, otherwise not. Such sort of surrendered life is most desirable – that much self-giving is desirable. Then, we are given hope and inspiration that the Centre is of such high quality.

The Brahma-samhita will come and say, “The land is touchstone, cintamani. The vrksas, the trees, are wish-fulfilling entities. Who are the inhabitants? Their movement means dancing, their speaking means singing – such a land is there. We may be accepted, recruited for that plane of life according to the degree of our surrender. This sort of sacrifice is a peculiar, unconditional sacrifice and does not come under any kind of calculation. Our faith is not within calculation but is emphatically in the Infinite sweetness of our Lord.

We are to know the Infinite in that beautiful land where the Absolute Autocrat plays according to His own sweet whims. So, be prepared for extreme self-sacrifice and self-abnegation. This is done through service – a serving attitude – by increasing our serving attitude and our self-giving. We shall not be attracted by some ambitious life with ambitious ideals. No! Rather, we shall try to give ourselves totally for His fullest satisfaction. This will be the perfection of all our endeavours.

### **Reality: by Itself & for Itself**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Isavasyam* – everything is meant for God. That is the Hegelian theory: reality is by itself and for itself. Hegel is the founder of Ideal Realism, so he says, “Reality is by itself and for itself.” “By itself,” means that he is His own cause; no one has created Him. Otherwise, whoever had created Him would have primary importance.

“For itself,” means that God exists only to fulfil His own purpose. This is the universal truth: everything is for Him, and nothing is for anyone else. So, when we think that the things around us are meant for us, or for our nation, or for the human beings, this is all a false calculation, and knowledge based on such a

miscalculation has its reaction.

“To every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.” I am eating something; it is entitled to eat me. In the Manu Samhita, the word mamsah is used to indicate meat. Mam means “Me,” sah means “he”. Mamsah means “me-he”. What is the meaning? I am eating him, and he will eat me afterwards as a reaction. He is entitled to devour me, as I am at present devouring him. This is the underlying meaning – every action, whatever it is, has its reaction. This is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gita (3.9):

*yajnarthat karmano ‘nyatra, loko ‘yam karma-bandhanah  
tad-artham karma kaunteya, mukta-sangah samacara*

“Unless work is done as a sacrifice for Visnu, one’s own work will be the cause of bondage; therefore work on My behalf, and free yourself from the chain of action and reaction.” Bhagavad-gita says that any work, no matter what it is, causes a reaction. For example, you may nurse a patient. Apparently , it is a good thing, but you are giving the patient medicine that comes from killing so many insects, trees, creepers and animals.

You may think that your nursing is a very pure duty, but you are causing a disturbance in the environment, and you will have to pay for that. In this way, whatever we do here cannot be perfectly good. The German philosopher Kant has said, “Without good will, no action can be perfectly good.” But we are of the opinion that even good will is impossible here in this mundane plane. According to Kant, good will is a pure thing, whereas no action here can be perfect, but we say that even good will is impossible in the relative calculation of the world, because we are plodding in the mud of misunderstanding.

Pure knowledge comes only from above, and we have to learn to accept that. When that sort of understanding comes within us, it is known sraddha, or faith. Faith is also a great thing. We should have faith that if we do our duty towards the absolute, then all our duties to the environment in all directions are automatically done (*krsna bhakti kaile sarva karma kṛta haya*).

By satisfying Kṛṣṇa, the whole universe becomes satisfied, for one who is dear to Kṛṣṇa is dear to the whole universe (*yasmin tuste jagat tustam prinito jagat*). Just as by watering the root of the tree all the leaves and branches are automatically nourished, by fulfilling one’s duty towards Lord Kṛṣṇa all one’s

duties are automatically fulfilled.

## **Remind me about you**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We are out to search for the Lord of love. The conception about whom is given in Bhagavatam, Chaitanya Charitamrta.

He is an Autocrat; but He has got a heart which is full of infinite love. We go out in search of such a master. We should not think that the path is covered by flowers. But it may be spread with thorns also. It is necessary to test our sincerity, how much is our hankering for that Lord.

Brahma adi deva yadi dhyani nahi paya. There is a Bengali verse that even a God like Brahma, the creator, cannot bring Him in his meditation.

*Hari virinchi vanchita deva.* Brahma and Shiva have got aspiration after Him, but there is no guarantee that they have got it. We have come out for such an ideal. So, we must be prepared for anything, any demand what may be necessary as the price for that. Even if we may not get Him, but still we want to remain on the path of searching for Him. There is an English proverb, "Virtue is its own reward." That I am virtuous, yes, that is my reward. I don't want anything else but to live a virtuous life. So, that we are on the path of search for the highest truth of Krsna consciousness, that is our reward. We don't want any other reward of success. What can be attained, that can be stale. So, He can never be attained in such a way that the future will be something stale.

*aslisya va pada-ratam pinastu mama adarsanan marma-hatam karotu va  
yatha tatha va vadadhatu lampato mat-prana-nathas tu sa eva naparah*  
Siksastaka 8

("I know none but Krsna as My Lord, and He shall remain so even if He handles

Me roughly in His embrace or makes Me broken-hearted by ignoring Me completely. He is completely free to do whatever He wants, for He is a debauchee, yet He is still My worshipful Lord, unconditionally.")

We are given advice and understanding in such a way. That for the destination, the highest destination which we have got a conception given by Krsna consciousness we must be prepared for anything else, any opposition. We shall rather invite like Kuntidevi, the Queen Kunti. She prays, "Please put me in danger, constant danger: that is my friend to remind me about you. I have thought it best, so give me danger." So, that should be our attitude in the quest of Krsna, and not that already acquired things at our disposal and the committee, the houses, the money, the power, and there is Krsna, the monopoly of Krsna is there, in the power-mongering and the showing of so much grandeur in the material world. It is not there. It is in faith, in deep faith, the ideal.

We have to consult the scripture, we have to consult the great honest men, the mahajanas, and the shastra. And our sincere heart, we cannot ignore that. We must have its approval, the deep approval of the heart, that what we are doing we are doing well, we are doing rightly. This sort of underground consciousness we must have when we go to search about Krsna.

*na dhanam na janam na sundarim kavitam va jagadisa kamaye  
mama janmani janmanisvare bhavatad-bhaktir-ahaituki tvayi*  
Siksastaka 4

("O almighty Lord, I have no desire to accumulate wealth, nor do I desire beautiful women, nor do I want any number of followers, nor do I care for the fame of a poet, or the poetically glorified position of impersonal liberation - I only want Your causeless devotional service birth after birth.")

The causeless attraction of Krsna- not dependent upon any other things or relations. Independent of all acquisition of this mundane world. It is independent; it does not depend on anything else. It is absolute. Everything has got a stand on it, but it is absolute. Exclusive attraction for Him.

## Revelation Through Sound

**Devotee:** In Bhaktivedanta Swami's Bhagavad-gita, he says in one purport that practicing renunciation has no benefit unless someone has a taste for Krsna consciousness. Can you explain this?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The sound must have Divine characteristic, Krsna, Hari, these sounds are *nirguna* and Divine. *Sabdha-brahma nama-krsna*.

*vaikuntha-nama-grahane  
asesagha haram viduh*

The name must be of infinite characteristic that can take away all that is undesirable in us. The name must have a spiritual conception not mere physical imitation, that can be produced only by the help of the lip and tongue. Krsna-nama, Hari-nama, Visnu, Narayana, all these are Vaikuntha-nama. It is necessary that They have spiritual existence, that is all in all. They must have spiritual depth, not imitation. Physical imitation is not the name proper.

Not sabdha-brahma. Only the imitation sound may come out, but no depth. So name means nama-brahma, nama-krsna, name means it must have some spiritual background or spiritual truth to be distributed through the physical sound. Just like a pill in homeopathic medicine, the pill is not the medicine. It may be nuxvomica, belladonna or anything else, but the globule is not the medicine. So sound is not Krsna, but Krsna is within. The name must be surcharged with the spirit, and that spirit is not of mundane character.

That is not found even in the Sankara school, or the Mayavadi school, because their faith is that the name is not confined within the jurisdiction of the physical, but it is only mental, sattva-guna. That it is also a product of this maya, misconception. That is their misunderstanding. So, those that think, that hari-nama, krsna-nama, siva-nama all are one and the same, like the Rama Krsna Mission or the Sankara school teach like that. But that idea originates in the plane of misunderstanding. So suddha nama must have its original form in nirguna-bhumika, far beyond the area of the misconception of maya. The influence of maya is applicable up to Viraja, then Brahmaloka, then Paravyoma. The real name must have its origin from Paravyoma, and Krsna-nama is

originating from Goloka, the most original plane of the whole existence. To be really krsna-nama it must have its origin in the highest plane of Vrndavana.

Nama-akara, the mere physical sound is not the name proper. The real name is necessary for us not only to get out of this world of maya or misunderstanding, but for the attainment of the service of Krsna in Vrndavana. That can lift us – the name which has got its origin in the Vrndavana plane – only that can take us there. Otherwise, if the spirit in the name, the sound, is of any other type it may take us to that mundane place only. It is quite scientific, not unreasonable.

So a mere word is not the name. The meaning and the gist of meaning, the deep conception of the meaning, that is everything – all in all. It is all important to serve our purpose.

**Devotee:** Is *tyaga*, or renunciation recommended for the neophytes?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, renunciation must always be *yukta-vairagya*. What will help me in my present condition to invest my highest energy for the cause, that sort of requirement we should take from this world.

We must not get excitement by intoxication, but accept only as much as needed materially to keep up my normal health in this world. If we think that with the help of exploitation or any other medicine we shall create some more energy, thinking that is the easy way, it is not only useless, but harmful. No material thing can help us to make progress in the spiritual world.

They can help to keep our body fit. Material things cannot have any contribution for the improvement of our spiritual position. Only we should “make the best of a bad bargain.” We are already committed on the material causes and from that only the negative aspects will be attained. Without food we cannot live, that much we shall have to accept, and we should not think that this will help me spiritually. This will keep our health normal and from that plane I shall serve. I shall search for Sri Krsna, take the name and do some service all from that normal plane. This is *yukta-vairagya*, proper detachment. Not more, not less. Neither less nor more we shall take. Both will be detrimental to our cause. All sorts of excitement, temporary excitement and risk should be avoided.

On the normal plane, we have earned our previous karma, and from there we should begin. We should not be attached to those things that are detrimental to our normal life, though, presently they seem to be helping, but they are not

giving a real contribution. We should understand this not only about intoxication, but even about money.

*dhana-sisyadibhir dvair  
ya bhaktir uppadyate  
viduratvad uttamata  
hanya tasyas ca nangata*  
(Bhakti rasamrta sindhu, Purva 257)

We may think that devotion may be earned by spending money, by using one's son or wife for the cause of devotion. "I am helping my wife to go on with devotional activities, so I shall get benefit," or "I am utilising my son for devotional purpose then by this I shall acquire devotion," or "My sisya, my disciple is becoming a good devotee, so as a guru, I must get something through him."

These things are not real devotion, Dhan, *sisya*, are only bodily thought. By giving money to the devotees, by helping the devotees, I shall get some benefit, but this is not *suddha-bhakti*. It may be sukrti, but not pure devotion. This is because money or these other things do not belong to you. Due to misidentification, you falsely think that you are master of this or that. So your whole self should be devoted.

What did Ambarisa Maharaj do? He was a king, but he did not try to earn devotion by money. Bharat Maharaj was very young and he was also a king, but he left everything and he went to earn devotion. Not that they tried to earn devotion through money. It is difficult to accept this. Money cannot buy devotion, but it helps those of lower class. They can get some money, some energy from this plane and utilise it for the service of the devotees and the Lord. Then they can get some sukrti, but not *suddha-bhakti*. *Suddha-bhakti* demands that you are His slave and as He may want you to serve Him, you must do that. Then you can rise up to the standard of *suddha-bhakti*.

You are His slave, and your nature should be to wait for His order and to carry it out. Under the guidance of the Guru who is in connection with Him, we just throw ourselves in His service and carry out His order. From Him the order is coming through guru and sadhu. I must place myself at the disposal of that *suddha* guru, a sadhu, who is already in direct connection with Him, His agent. We place ourselves at his disposal: whatever He will ask, I will do it – that will

be real service.

Therefore, it is said in the Sastra, that the service of the Vaisnava is better than the direct service of the Lord. The cause is that, if I approach Him directly, then I have to imagine or suppose that this may be His direction. It may or may not be perfect, it may be contaminated, adulterated by my conception, thinking that this must be His order. But when it is coming through the real sadhu, His agent, then if I can do that, it has direct connection with Him, a real connection. So it brings more improvement in me than my direct approach.

The Name must be *vaikuntha nama grahanam*, of infinite characteristic – that is Vaikuntha, and not a member of this mundane or measured plane. Maya is measured by local or provincial interest, and not absolute interest. It must not be rooted there, but it must have its connection with the Absolute plane, then it will come and transform me and prepare me, make me fit for the service of that Absolute plane. Krsna is there, it is not a thing of concoction or imagination. It is Reality, and what we think to be real at present is all unreal.

At present we are in the midst of a particular experience of the world that is unreal, that will soon evaporate, but what we are searching for through the sastras and the sadhus, the plane where Krsna lives and our personalities there in connection of that plane within us, that is all truth.

*ya nisa sarva-bhutanam tasam jagarti samyami  
yasyam jagrati bhutani sa nisa pasyato muneh*  
(Bhagavad-gita 2.69)

What is night to one is day to another and what is day to one is night to another. We are now wakeful only in the calculation of the local and provincial interest of the world. The human conception thrown on the infinite has different stages. Different type of thinkers throw on the environment their own color and live accordingly: that is all sanctioned, and that is all misconception.

The Absolute has His own conception that comes out of His own perception, and we must be converted into that. Only our soul can have experience and get membership there, not this bodily life. The eye, the mind, they cannot grasp that thing, only through our ear it must come to our soul. The soul will be awakened and all the rulings of the mind and senses will evaporate.

Then we will get our real body of our soul. It will emerge from our present

conscious body and mind. Everything must be of a spiritual order, not imitation. The sahajiya school try to find what they have heard about Krsna in this mundane plane. In this plane they want to find it, but it is not possible. We have to go there through *sadhana* under the direction of the real *sadhu*.

## Reveletion Through Sound

**Devotee:** In Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami's Bhagavatgita, he says in one purport that practicing renunciation has no benefit unless someone has a taste for Krsna consciousness. Can you explain this?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The sound must have Divine characteristic, Krsna, Hari, these sounds are nirguna and Divine. Sabdha brahma nama-krsna vaikuntha-nama-grahane asesagha haram viduh. The name must be of finite characteristic that can take away all that is undesirable in us. The name must have a spiritual conception not mere physical imitation,

that can be produced only by the help of the lip and tongue. Krsna-nama, Hari-nama, Visnu, Narayana, all these are Vaikuntha-nama, it is necessary that They have spiritual existence, that is all in all. They must have spiritual depth, not imitation. Physical imitation is not the name proper. Not sabdha-brahma. Only the imitation sound may come out, but not depth. So name means nama-brahma, nama-krsna, name means it must have some spiritual background or spiritual truth to be distributed through the physical sound. Just like a pill in homeopatic medicine, the pill is not the medicine. It may be Nux-vomica, Belladona or anything else, but the globule is not the medicine. So sound is not Krsna, but Krsna is within.

The name must be surcharged with the spirit , and that spirit is not of mundane character. That is not found even in the Sankara school, or the Mayavadi school, because their faith is that the name is not confined within the jurisdiction of the physical, but it is only mental, sattva-guna. That is also product of this maya, misconception. That is their misunderstanding. So, those that think, that Hari-

nama, Krsna-nama, Siva-nama all are one and the same, like the Rama-Krsna Mission or the Sankara school teach like that. But that idea originates in the plane of misunderstanding. So suddha-nama must have it's original form in nirguna-bhumika, far beyond the area of the misconception of maya. The influence of maya is applicable up to Viraja, then Brahmaloaka, then Paravyoma. The real name must have it's origin from Paravyoma, and Krsna-nama is originating from Goloka, the most original plane of the whole existence. To be really Krsna-nama it must have it's origin in the highest plane of Vrndavana.

*Nama-akara*, the mere physical sound is not the name proper. The real name is necessary for us not only to get out of this world of maya or misunderstanding, but for the attainment of the service of Krsna in Vrndavana. That can lift us - the name which has it's origin in the Vrndavana plane - only that can take us there. Otherwise, if the spirit in the name, the sound, is of any other type it may take us to that mundane place only. It is quite scientific, not unreasonable.

So a mere word is not the name. The meaning and the gist of meaning, the deep conception of the meaning, that is everything - all in all. It is all important to serve our purpose.

**Devotee:** Is *tyaga*, or renunciation recommended for the neophyte?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, renunciation must always be *yukta-vairagya*. What will help me in my present condition to invest my highest energy for the cause, that sort of requirement we should take from this world. We must not get excitement by intoxication, but accept only as much as needed materially to keep up my normal health in this world. If we think that with the help of exploitation or any other medicine we shall create some more energy, thinking that is the easy way, it is not only useless, but harmful. No material thing can help us to make progress in the spiritual world. They can help to keep our body fit. Material things cannot have any contribution for the improvement of our spiritual position. Only we should make "the best of the bad bargain." We are already committed to the material causes and from that only the negative aspects will be attained.

Without food we cannot live, that much we shall have to accept, and we should not think that this will help me spiritually. This will keep our health normal and from that plane I shall serve. I shall search for Sri Krsna, take the Name and do some service all from the normal plane. This is *yukta-vairagya*, proper

detachment. Not more, not less. Neither less nor more we shall take. Both will be detrimental to our cause. All sorts of excitement, temporary excitement and risk should be avoided.

On the normal plane, we have earned our previous karma, and from there we should begin. We should not be attached to those things that are detrimental to our normal life, though, presently they seem to be helping, but they are not giving a real contribution. We should understand this not only about intoxication, but even about money.

*dhana-sisyadibhir dvaair ya bhaktir uppadyate  
viduratvad uttamata hanya tasyas ca nangata*  
(B.r.s Purva 257)

We may think that devotion may earned by spending money, by using one's son or wife for the cause of devotion. "I am helping my wife to go on with devotional activities, so I shall get benefit," or "I am utilising my son for devotional purpose then by this I shall acquire devotion," or "My sisya, my disciple is becoming good devotee, so as a guru, I must get something through him." These things are not real devotion. Dhan, sisya, are only bodily thought. By giving money to the devotees, by helping the devotees, I shall get some benefit, but this is not suddha-bhakti. It may be *sukrti*, but not pure devotion. This is because money or these other things do not belong to you. Due to misidentification, you falsly think that you are master of this or that. So your whole self should be devoted.

What did Ambarish Maharaja do? He was a king, but he did not try to earn devotion by money. Bharata Maharaja was very young and he went to earn devotion. Not that they tried to earn devotion through money. It is difficult to accept this. Money cannot buy devotion, but it helps those of lower class. They can get some money some energy from this plane and utilize it for the service of the devotees and the Lord. Then they can get some *sukrti*, but not suddha-bhakti. Suddha-bhakti demands that you are His slave and as he may want you, to serve Him, you must do that. Then you can rise up to the standard of suddha-bhakti.

You are His slave, and your nature should be to wait for His order and to carry it out. Under the guidance of the guru who is in connection with Him, we just throw ourselves in His service and carry out His order. From Him the order is coming through guru and sadhu. I must place myself at the disposal of that

suddha guru, a sadhu, who is already in direct connection with Him, His agent. We place ourselves at his disposal: whatever He will ask, I will do it - that will be real service.

Therefore, it is said in the sastra, that the service of the Vaisnava is better than the direct service of the Lord. The cause is that, if I approach Him directly, then I have to imagine or suppose that this may be His direction. It may or may not be perfect, it may be contaminated, adulterated by my conception, thinking that this must be His order. But when it is coming through the real sadhu, His agent, then if I can do that, it has direct connection with Him, a real connection. So it brings more improvement in me than my direct approach.

The Name must be vaikuntha nama grahanam, of infinite characteristic - that is Vaikuntha, and not a member of this mundane or measured plane. Maya is measured by local or provincial interest, and not absolute interest. It must not be rooted there, but it must have it's connection with the Absolute plane, then it will come and transform me and prepare me, make me fit for the service of that Absolute plane. Krsna is there, it is not a thing of concoction or imagination. It is Reality, and what we think to be real at present is all unreal.

At present we are in the midst of a particular experience of the world that is unreal, that will soon evaporate, but what we are searching for through the sastras and the sadhus, the plane where Krsna lives and our personalities there in connection of that plane within us, that is all truth.

*ya nisa sarva-bhutanam tesam jagarti samyami  
yasyam jagrati bhutani sa nisa pasyato muneh*  
(Bhagavad-gita 2. 69)

What is night to one is day to another and what is day to one is night to another. We are now wakeful only in the calculation of the local and provincial interest of the world. The human conception thrown on the infinite has different stages. Different type of thinkers throw on the environment their own color and live accordingly: that is all sanctioned, and that is all misconception. The Absolute has His own conception that comes out of His own perception, and we must be converted in to that. Only our soul can have experience and get membership there, not this bodily life. The eye, the mind, they cannot grasp that thing, only through our ear it must come to our soul, soul will be awakened and all the rulings of the mind and senses will evaporate.

Then we will get our real body of our soul. It will emerge from our present conscious body and mind. Everything must be of spiritual order, not imitation. The sahajiya school try to find what they have heard about Krsna in this mundane plane. In this plane they want to find it, but it is not possible. We have to go there through sadhana under the direction of the real *sadhu*.

## **Rupanuga-sampradaya**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Our Guru Maharaj (Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur), he was always Rupanuga, Rupanuga, Rupanuga. Raganuga, and then Rupanuga, particular. Generally Raganuga, and then particularly Rupanuga.

That is our paricara, identification, our nature. Bhaktivinoda Thakur says, “I run to get admission under the management, administration of Rupa Goswami.” Who runs? He who has got such aspiration. He runs to become enlisted in the group of Sri Rupa, who has got such sort of prospect.

And that will be the highest attainment of our fortune. He has declared it, Raghunatha Das Goswami.

And still now, that is the point of my achievement for the whole Gaudiya Sampradaya. Raghunatha Das Goswami is the acharya of our highest necessity, our ultimate aim; he is the prayojana acharya. By the grace of all of you, and by the necessity, Prabhupada (Srila Saraswati Thakur) had dragged these things from me, and I cannot but remember that he wanted me to go to the West.

**Devotee:** To tell everyone about Das Goswami. He wanted you to perhaps deliver this conception that you are carrying, for the benefit of the world. To spread this knowledge about the Goswamis, Prabhupada wanted you to go to the West.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Anyhow, and the credit is to Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj.

**Devotee:** And Prabhupada wanted to bring everybody here.

**Other Devotee:** Now your speaking is going to the West.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That is by the grace of Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj. Kalidas says in the Raghuvamsa when he is approaching to describe about the Raghuvamsa, the dynasty of Raghu, in which Lord Rama appeared: “I am a man of small literary experience; so many stalwarts have sprang from that great Raghu vamsa, and I am going to describe about them with my least wealth of poetry?” He says that, and many slokas are devoted for that purpose. There is one:

*athava krtavardhare  
granthe ‘sminn purva suribhih  
mano vajra samuthena  
sutresye vastune gatih*

The previous renowned kavis, poets like Valmiki Muni and Srila Vyasadeva, have given a description of Raghu-vamsa, and they have made the path of my entering into that sacred description easy. How? In a necklace of jewels, the jewel is a hard thing; the thread cannot pierce it, the iron needle drill has already made a hole through it, and now the thread is passing easily. So, Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj was like a vajra, a powerful drill, the hard thing has already been pierced by him, and like a thread, I am passing through that.

He was so simple; so great and so simple at the same time. Anyhow, Mahaprabhu, our Gurudeva has done through him a tremendous inconceivable thing. Even one Maharaj, who could not tolerate all these things, because he was first in charge to go to the West, and could not get the desired success, but the other day, when coming from Mayapura, that Maharaj said, “It is achintya: inconceivable. He did not want to give recognition, but from his mouth, the word came out. That what Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj did, that is achintya: it is inconceivable. So, it is divine. It is inconceivable what he has done, what Nityananda Prabhu, what Baladeva has done through him, that is inconceivable.

**Devotee:** Is it possible to have two rasas in the spiritual world?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It is not seen generally. The permission is possible. In the first stage, it may not be detected and this is a great problem to us, and a great guidance to us. Anyhow, we have come to a group which is exclusively the

group of madhurya rasa. The guru-parampara you see, not of vatsalya rasa, but to madhurya rasa. Or the mantram, leading to madhurya rasa. Madhurya rasa is all-accommodating rasa, and that was mainly given by Mahaprabhu, and also Rupa, so Mahaprabhu, and also Rupanuga Sampradaya had the mantram, what we get, all rasa combined, and to help that rasa, the service of that rasa, other paraphernalia has been created.

Adi rasa, and mukhya rasa. Two paricaya: denominations of the work of rasa. They are identical. Adirasa means that is the most original rasa – madhurya arasa. And mukhya rasa, the principle rasa is madhurya rasa. And the zenith of all rasa is found there.

Our guru parampara is all in all madhurya rasa, and the mantras that are given to us are all in madhurya rasa, so that is the real work. Anarpita ciram cirat karunaya vartina kalau ... Mahaprabhu came to give what was not previously given. That Radha Govinda, they came to jointly give the type of divine love to the public. “If you have such a qualification you can come up to this, the highest quarter.” That was the necessity of Sri Guaranga, to distribute that. All others are subservient, helping that rasa of Krsna. So, in our childhood, when not sufficiently developed, we may run here and there, but ultimately, we shall mostly go there.

**Devotee:** Different individuals will have their respective rasas, but the original mood, the objective, is to enhance the madhurya rasa, support the madhurya rasa. Say somebody is in sakhya rasa, but he is in Mahaprabhu’s movement, he is trying all the time ....

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** That is also an instance. Not only that, but greater than that. Mahaprabhu tried to convert Murari Gupta, but He could not. Then he left. His strong inclination was towards Ramachandra. But still, Murari Gupta had some respect for this. Then, also, perhaps Rupa Goswami and Sanatana tried their best to take the father of Jiva Goswami, Anupama – he was a devotee of Ramachandra – to take him to krsna-lila, but they also failed. So, they tried, and that has got some value, even by Mahaprabhu and Sanatana, that is not a chance coincidence or a flickering or false attempt. So it is possible, and at the same time, there is such a strong and innate nature, that cannot be converted. That faith, that thing, is in the jiva. Both sides have been pleaded here.

**Devotee:** Maharaj, it has been clear now, in a way, that Prabhupad (Srila Bhaktivedana Swami Maharaj) was in the *sakhya rasa*?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** At least temporarily he has showed like that. What he has expressed there in that journey there, it is almost clear that he liked that sort of lila best, but it may be, it might have been suppressed purposely; it also cannot be denied, maybe. That is one thing. There may be such a possibility, and he has given, he has said that Radharani was his gurudeva. His gurudeva was Radharani, but he himself was thinking that perhaps madhurya rasa should not be distributed in the first instalment. That might have been his view.

Because his preaching was mostly helped by Nityanananda Prabhu, Baladeva, so influenced by their tendency, their mood, he might have for the time being had that footing. And another thing: there is another sign that he showed affinity for sakhya rasa. In Vrndavana, he has installed Baladeva, Krsna Balarama, and Nitai Gaura. Sakhya rasa preference. That also may be with the previous idea: that generally, by the influence of Nityananda, Nityananda and Baladeva has helped me to preach the lila of Krsna in such a broad way, so in gratitude, he might have placed that vigraha.

But our Guru Maharaj did not place, only in Panca Tattva and other places, otherwise, where the pure madhurya rasa, Mahaprabhu, Radha-Govinda and Mahaprabhu, everywhere: He installed Mahaprabhu, both combined and Radha Govinda, separate. Radha krsna pranaya vikrtir hladini saktir asmad. But Guru Maharaj, through preached exclusively this madhurya rasa, but great precaution. What is not that thing, he perhaps used ninety percent of his energy to preach that “This is not madhurya rasa.” To clear away the negative side, he had to spare in his words, “Gallons of blood” to be spared to teach that this is not madhurya rasa.

Neti neti: this is not that thing, this is not that thing. And whatever he did, pujala ragapatha gaurava bhange. This whole life in a nutshell is expressed in this, his own expression. Pujala ragapatha, the very nature of my sampradaya is this. Pujala ragapatha gaurava bhange matala sadhujana visaya range.

**Sacrifice, Rasa and Divine Love**

**Devotee:** Guru Maharaj, how can we please you? What can we do that will be pleasing to you?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Krsna is for Himself, that is He exists for His own purpose, and we also exist for Him. When you can adopt this line of life, for which I am also trying to use my energy wholesale, when you will join that concern then I will be pleased.

What I am to do with this life, I like that others will also follow that. My life is only meant for Krsna, and naturally I would like that others will also follow this same route. That is only natural. “sri caitanya manobhistam”, what is the desire of Sri Chaitanya, and accordingly, the desire of my Guru Maharaj, I want to work towards fulfilling that.

Under the direction of my Gurudev, I am following the path to Radha-Krsna consciousness, where we will enter the domain where Radharani is serving Her most beloved Lord Krsna.

We consider this to be our highest goal, and any day, anytime in this infinite time, we want to reach that goal, the highest ideal. It is our only aim in life, and we consider that everyone should accept it as their summum bonum. What is the most faultless, purest conception of life?

Exploitation is filthy, and renunciation is zero, therefore service, loving service is the highest zenith of purity. We want to prepare ourselves for that cause – the most intense loving service with no tinge of exploitation. Purity depends only on how much we can sacrifice our self for the highest object, and that is love proper. It is based on sacrifice, not on exploitation. Love proper stands on the plane of sacrifice. As much sacrifice, then that much we will have love, the basis of love must be sacrifice – the pure love. Die to live. Sacrifice does not end only in renunciation. That is only the negative side, but there is positive sacrifice.

Sacrifice for the perfect cause, the absolute good. And that sacrifice is living, it does not just reach the zero and disappear, not that Samadhi. No, it is the most intensified life, possessed of the highest degree of living energy. The standard of that sacrifice we cannot conceive of and we may never be able to reach that standard. Here we have some experience of heat but within the sun how much heat is there? It is inconceivable, and intolerable to us, but we cannot deny that it exists. The highest degree of heat is found in the sun and there are also

substances that can stand that heat, but we can only tolerate the sun from some distance.

So in the same way, we can only render service under the direction of the highest servitors. In Krsnaloka there is a special group of servitors in every Rasa: dasya, sakhya, vatsalya and madhura (servitude, friendship, parental and consortherhood), and we are to reach that certain distance in relation to them, where we will thrive most. We cannot stand if we venture to go nearer. So Radha-dasya is necessary, or Yasoda-dasya, nanda-dasya, Sudhama-dasya, because their degree of serving sacrifice will be intolerable to us, due to our constitution. Only from behind them can we render our service. We can do our duty and that will be our acme. Our highest aspiration should be there, this has been recommended for us.

The first group is already there, and we can never take the place of them. Only from behind them, in the second or third line, we can do our best work, and our highest attainment will be from that position. From there we will be able to have some experience of the higher order, we will get some view how things are going on in the area of most intense heat.

One poet has written that if the fly falls into the pot of honey while trying to taste its sweetness, then he will die. Its wings will be covered with honey and it will drown there. But if, instead of honey the pot is filled with amrita then the fly won't die, because it is amrita. Taking the sweetness of that amrita one will get eternal life.

So we cannot tolerate the "heat" but that heat is sweet heat. It will not burn us but we can't stand, we can't raise ourselves up to that degree. It is not within us. Just like we are limited as to what we can see. The most intense light is invisible to us, for example the X-ray. And sound, a very high sound will be inaudible to us, as will a very low sound. Only in the middle can we hear. The senses are like that, and the position of the soul is also like that, and the position of the soul is also like that, it has its range within which it thrives.

Visvanath Chakravarti has in a nutshell described what is our duty, that our object of adoration is the Lord Nanda-nandana, Krsna, the son of the king of Vraja, and His capital is Vrindavan. A sweet forest town. The Yamuna is there, Radha-kunda, the Govarddhan Hill, and so many Kadamba trees, lotus flowers – many wonderful things. A garden town, Vrindavan, that is His Capital. And there we find a peculiar type of worship which has been designed by the damsels of Vrindavan, the Gopis. They have discovered a very peculiar, sweet type of

service, worship of their Lord of Love. We have much charm for that. The type of worship and adoration designed by the Gopis, that is the most attractive.

How do we know that this is the truth? This may all be imagination. Where is your evidence, your witnesses, where is your guarantee that you may get that thing? Who can say that it is not purely imagination?

The great scripture Srimad Bhagavatam, which is acknowledged as the very gist of all revealed scriptures, that holy book stands guarantee for us all. And what does it offer, that Bhagavatam? You are to aspire and strive so hard, but what will be your remuneration?

You will receive the fifth end of life, and that is Love Divine. You will be able to taste that nectar of Love Divine. That has been reserved for you. And where do you get that? Who has taught that? Who has given this information to you? Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, that great Lord, Chaitanyadev. He has come with all these fine things, these wonderful things and out greatest respect is for this advice, this direction of our life.

**Devotee:** Maharaj, can we all get there?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, we can all have our birth in that land. All can be accommodated there, that is the nature of the infinite. But there is gradation according to our capacity. Santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, madhura, in this way the hierarchy is there. There is the clear, the officer, the confidential officer – gradation. The friendly circle, they will have to serve under Subala, Sudhama, Sridham, etc., their eternal leaders in that Rasa. In the filial circle, Nanda, Yasoda and others are the permanent leaders, and we may serve under them.

In Madhura-rasa also there is the selected group. So we are to be located in some area of service. So many services are there; the garland service, the food service, the fanning service, and so on. So according to my inner taste I shall be grouped there in a particular section where I will get my duty. There I will get my best satisfaction, I will be fulfilled as much as may be contained within my heart. And sometimes, like hunger, I will feel separation and then there will be union. Separation will prepare us for relishing the food even more.

In this way there are so many arrangements in that Land. Heart's transaction has its facility there. Bhakti comes from the heart. Heart holds a higher position than the brain. Ruci (taste) is the sweetest thing there. No calculation is found in

Vrindavan. In Vaikuntha of course, the position of brain is there to some degree. But in Vrindavan – reflex action, inspiration, love is the moving force.

## **Sadhu-sangha**

**Devotee:** How can a person exclusively desire to serve Krsna, when so many other desires are coming to him, as if bombarding him? What should he do? One may know, at least, what should be the highest standard or ideal to strive for; but in such circumstances, it seems so difficult to be fixed in the pure service aspiration.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** If you can manage to enter the positive, then the negative will remain far away: this is the basic principle.

As much as we can make progress towards the positive, automatically the negative will have to withdraw, to leave us. The positive is sadhu-sangha, sadhu-sastra-sangha, association with saints and scriptures. No other thing is needed, only the simple thing: our association with the sadhu. And association with the sadhu means, with surrender. So, surrender to the positive, and, according to the degree of surrender, and confidence in what the sadhu and sastra say, automatically the negative, the apparently irresistible demands of material desire, will be withdrawn.

And in the positive side, there is gradation: vaikuntha-bhakti, devotion to Narayana; devotion to Ramacandra; then to Dwarakesa; then to Krsna in Vrindavan. Progress through selection and elimination will continue there. But always, this should be our earnest prayer:

*viracaya mayi dandam dinabandho dayam va  
gatih iha na bhavattah kacid anya mamasti  
nipatatu sata-kotir nirbharam va navambhas*

*tad api kila payodah stuyate catakena*  
(Srila Rupa Goswami)

“O Friend of the most needy, whether You chastise me or reward me, in the whole wide world I have no other shelter but You. Whether the thunderbolt strikes or torrents of fresh waters shower down, the Cataka bird, who drinks only the pure falling rainwater, perpetually goes on singing the glories of the raincloud.”

Krsna is the friend of the fallen *dinabandhu* dayam va He may do anything and everything, at His sweet wish. Rupa Goswami here prays: “You may make or mar, but I have got no alternative but to want Your grace. Everything is tasteless, it is tasteless to me, my Lord; please accept me, give me some sort of menial service to your holy feet.” This is what is needed: our earnest prayer, deep prayer towards Him for His grace, for His service, and to have no other alternative. We must be like the Cataka, the bird who never takes any water, however pure, which has fallen on the earth, but only that from above, from the sky. With her face to the sky, she waits, praying: “*pratik jala, pratik jala*”, “a drop of water, a drop of water...” And water may come so profusely from the sky as to drown her, or a thunderbolt may come, and finish her; whatever may come, whatever may happen, she has no other alternative but to pray: “O Lord, give Your grace, a drop of Your grace. That grace is infinite. For You to give a drop is nothing, yet it may save the whole world. So, I have no other alternative...” We must have such *saranagati*, surrender, and such hankering.

And we can get much help from His associates the devotees, the Lord’s own. They are really our friends because in their association, our hankering may be increased. And, *sajati-yasaye snigdhe sadhau sangah svato vare* (B.r.s. 1:2:90), good association for us will be with a sadhu who is of the same line, and superior to myself. In *sadhu-sanga*, this has been recommended, that the sadhu will be in the same line as myself: of the same type of hankering, of aspiration, as well as holding a position in devotion superior, even a little, than me. I shall try to throw myself at his disposal; and that will help me to the greatest extent.

This human life is rare, and it is transient; any moment, I may die. At any moment I may be finished here, and this chance may not occur again. This human life, with its special opportunity, and some favourable environment, may not come again. So, it is important to perceive this, to conceive of the value of the time in our hand; we must be particularly conscious about the great value of

our present moment.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, this question was asked by Pariksit Maharaj to Sukadev Goswami:

“I have only one more week to live. In this short time, please give me some instruction, that I may be saved.”

And Sukadev replied:

“Oh, one week that is enough!”

From Sukadev Goswami came this statement a wonderful thing! He explained:

“O King, we have passed so much time, so many lives, in this world. From time immemorial we are having our existence, our life but it has not been utilised. But only one second, if properly utilised, is sufficient, Maharaj. Such is the fact. So, try to utilise your time, the point of time, moment of time at your disposal, for the best possible purpose. There are so many mountains, so many trees, and they have a long life, a long, long life what of that? If one is unmindful, unattentive to one’s own interest, a long life is of no value. But if we can properly understand our situation, and our necessity, then only one moment, properly utilised, will produce immense growth in us, an immensely fruitful result.”

Then Sukadev gave the history of Khatvanga Maharaj and how he utilised the one moment he had left to live. Khatvanga Maharaj asked the gods:

“Will you tell me how long I have to live?”

They replied:

“Only one moment.”

“Oh, then you all go. You cannot give me my desired result. Who can give me that?”

The gods answered:

“Only Narayana can fulfil your desire.”

And Khatvanga Maharaj said:

“Then, all of you leave me, go!”

And without any reservation, he surrendered to the feet of the Lord; he engaged himself in His service, and achieved his desired end:

*khatvango nama rajarsir, jnatveyatam ihayusah  
muhurtat sarvam utsrjya, gatavan abhayam harim*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 2:1:13)

“The saintly King Khatvanga, after being informed that the duration of his life would be only a moment more, at once freed himself from all material activities and took shelter of the supreme safety, the Personality of Godhead.”

The Lord is specifically mentioned in this verse as Hari: gatavan abhayam harim. And who is Hari? He is abhayam: when we get Him, then all apprehension, all fear and every undesirable thing will be vanquished, forever. ‘Hari’ means saccidananda eternal existence, perfect consciousness and also the fulfilment of life in ecstatic joy. Maharaj Khatvanga achieved all this within one moment!

## **Sambandha-jnana**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Nirjana-bhajan* or *smarana*, exclusive solitary devotion unconscious of the environment, is not at all possible for the beginners. Guru Maharaj clearly said that when we are in a lower position, *smarana* is injurious. Rather, we should take to kirtana. Kirtana pra-bhava, *smarane haibe, se kale bhajana nirjana smabhava*. The sahajiya school are more fond of *smarana* than kirtana. They are “followers of *smarana*”.

They lead a secluded life, and mentally go on identifying themselves with a particular sakhi of their own age, her duty, her place of attendance in a particular place of Vrndavana, in a particular lila, under the guidance of a particular sakhi, and so on. They are required to go on meditating on all these things by their so-called guru. That is the process amongst the sahajiya school, but we do not admit that. We consider it false and imaginary. They are not fit to enter that plane of Radha-Govinda lila. They do not have real *sambandha-jnana*, knowledge of what is what. They only go on with the habitual repetition of a particular mental speculation, but anartha-nivrtti (purging of all evils) or any other process based on it cannot be effected. Their imaginary achievement is sheer concoction. They are not aware of the facts the ontological gradation from Viraja to Brahmaloaka, Vaikuntha and Goloka. They are pukura-curiwale (pond thieves). To think that one can steal a pond is self-deception. We think that kind of “*smarana*” to be

something like self-deception.

One must gradually reach the plane of truth – *suddha-sattva*. There are so many planes, so many planets to cross over – Bhur, Bhuvah, Svah, Mahar, Janar, Tapar, Satyaloka, Viraja, Brahmaloaka. Mahaprabhu says that the creeper of bhakti grows and rises up to Goloka, and she has to cross all these planes.

*upaniya bade lata 'brahmamda' bhedi yaya  
'viraja', 'brahmaloaka', bhedi'paravyoma' paya  
tabe yaya tad upari 'goloka-vrndavana'  
'krsna-carana' – kalpavrkse kare arohana  
(Sri Chaitanya Charitamrta, Madhya 19.153.4)*

“The creeper of devotion is born, and grows to pierce the wall of the universe. It crosses the Viraja river of passivity (the “causal ocean”) and the Brahman plane, and reaches to the Vaikuntha plane. Then it grows further up to Goloka Vrndavana, finally reaching to embrace the wish-yielding tree of Krsna’s Lotus Feet.”

But the pseudo-devotees do not care to know what is Paravyoma, what is Brahmaloaka, what is Viraja, what is the Brahmamda. Without caring to know about these things, they approach any guru, receive some mantram, and go on meditating. But in such a stage, if one goes on meditating on Radha-Govinda lila, instead of entering Radha-Govinda lila, he will rather entangle himself with the ladies and gents of this world. He will become entangled in the domain of lust and he will have to go to hell instead of going up to Goloka.

Carma-mamsamaya – kama, prema – cidananda-dhama. The carnal appetite is lust, whereas love is the abode of divine ecstasy. So imitation is not success, Rather, it degrades. Imitation degrades. Imagination is only a mental exercise.

**Devotee:** What if that mental exercise is done with faith?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Mind is separate from the soul. Sraddha, faith, is connected with the soul, atma, and mind is matter. Mind is a part of the material potency, maya. This is clarified in Gita:

*bhumir apo 'nalo vayur kham mano buddhi eva ca  
ahankara itiyam me bhinna prakrtir astadha  
(Bhagavad-gita 7.4)*

“My deluding potency in this world is divided in eight ways: earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence, and false ego.”

Mind is a product of the material potency, and the jiva is a product of parasakti, the principal potency. The svarupa-sakti, the Lord’s personal potency, is a further higher potency, higher than the jiva. The nature of the mind’s is mental speculation (manodharma). That speculative thought has nothing to do with truth. The experiences of the mind are all drawn from the material world, the world of misconception. The mind is full of misconception (avan-manso gocarah). Mind cannot reach the stage of feeling or perceiving truth proper. It is only related to mundane things and selfish exploitation.

**Devotee:** But isn’t pure mind a product of *sraddha*?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Mind cannot be pure. Just as a fossil cannot produce life, so similarly, mind cannot produce *sraddha*. *Sraddha* is original and fundamental. When the Supreme Lord appears in the heart, mind vanishes, Darkness cannot produce light. Light comes, darkness vanishes. Truth appears when real pure consciousness appears, and mental speculation vanishes.

## **Sankara’s philosophy**

**Devotee:** Why is it that Sankara’s philosophy has so much appeal to people in general?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It is a compromise; it apparently gives harmony to all the sections of worshipers of different types of gods. There are so many worshipers of so many gods; and Sankara harmonises them: “What you are doing, it is alright you are worshiping Kali, or you are worshiping Ganesa, or Surya, or Agni, or Visnu all is good, I accept all but that is only for the time being, and to a certain extent. But finally, your attempt will end in the attainment of brahma.

If you can accept this as the final end, I accept you all.” Because of this compromise, Sankara’s thought is widely accepted by the atheistic section; you can understand it in this way. And as I have mentioned, Sankara showed the colour of accepting the Veda and Upanisad, but he gave this sort of meaning, that everything ends in brahma; and through that, he apparently harmonised and embraced them all.

Another thing which contributed to his popularity was that he was brilliant, an intellectual giant, and he fought against the Buddhistic thinkers who were out-and-out atheists; with the colour of theism, he fought against the atheist number one, the Buddhist. And his success in that gave him much popularity.

**Devotee:** There appear to be so many different religions, all under the banner of theism. This is often confusing for the general public. Sometimes the Vaisnava is asked: “Why are there so many different religions, theistic religions? Someone is worshipping Allah, someone is worshipping Christ there seem to be so many differences.” How should he reply?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** According to the different levels of theistic receiving capacity of the people, different groupings are there. And the truth is distributed in installments, accordingly. Those who are materialistically inclined generally worship the demigods to attain so many benefits:

*kamais tais tair hrta-jnanah,  
prapadyante ‘nya-devatah  
tam tam niyamam asthaya,  
prakṛtya niyatah svaya  
(Bhagavadgita 7:20)*

“Persons whose good intelligence has been spoiled by illicit desires for exploitation and renunciation or other duplicitous pursuits, worship other godly personalities such as the Sun-god and the many demigods. Being enslaved by their instinct, they adopt the corresponding rules and regulations of such worship, accordingly.”

This is called upasana worship. But the Vaisnavas are nirupasana; they do not follow that line. Those who follow the upasana are worshipping the demigods who are in possession of some power of nature in order to get, by their grace, their desired end. Those who seek good health go to Surya; for general

satisfaction of any lusty desire, they go to Kali; for property and resources, to the fire-god, Agni; and those who want knowledge, go to Siva. Lord Siva has got versatile knowledge in medicine, in yoga, in music, and also in indifference, and penance all these many qualifications are combined, are concentrated in him.

So, many go to worship Siva for knowledge. And those that want mukti, liberation, they go to Visnu, Narayana. But the 'Narayana' of the followers of Sankara, he is also under maya, a part of maya. According to them, Siva himself is also such; but, Siva is trying to get out of maya, to become master of maya. In this way they represent him.

According to their choice, their inner necessity while wandering in different stages of misunderstanding, people will select their leader: "O, he will be best able to help me. My aim is this side, in this direction, so I should go to him." Just as one who wants to be a good football player will naturally go to the most qualified leader in that field; one who wants to be a good merchant, he must go to the expert, and who wants to be a scholar, a research scholar, he must similarly go to the most qualified in that area. Those whose minds are influenced by various material desires will approach those respective leaders and surrender to them (kamais tais tair hrta-jnanah, prapadyante 'nya-devatah )

And for those who want real theistic life, there are also installments. In Mohammedanism, in Christianity, there is theism, they accept the eternity of God, one eternal God, eternal Master; but that acceptance is according to their nature, as a group. Just as there is brahmana nature, ksatriya nature, vaisya nature and so on; according to the different general nature of the different nations, they have been given such installments in theism.

In Srimad Bhagavatam we find that installments are given, are distributed, according to the receivers' capacity collectively, as a group.

Otherwise, if the whole is given at once, it will be too difficult, too complex for them to understand or to follow. So for the beginners, some theistic conception has been given only approximately, and not in detail. After attaining further birth and rebirth, when they will come to a higher position, then higher education about theism will be imparted to them. With such a policy, arrangement has been made for everyone by the Lord, through the various scriptures and saints. This is why we find Vedic knowledge- Truth existing beyond our present senses- presented through the scriptures in an indirect, veiled manner in order to instruct those who are undisciplined or foolish. People are to be dealt with according to

their stage. A boy should be given the standard of examination of a boy, not of a grown-up man. The questions in a boys' examination will be of a different standard than those in the adults'. Gradually one will be taken to the higher standard. Just as a child is guided with some modified policy, similarly that sort of process has been adopted in the scriptures:

*paroksa-vada vedo 'yam,  
balanam anusasanam  
karma-moksaya karmani,  
vidhatte hy agadam yatha*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 11:3:44)

“Childish and foolish people are attached to materialistic, fruitive activities, although the actual goal of life is to become free from such activities and attain Krsna consciousness, the service of Krsna. Therefore, the Vedic injunctions indirectly lead one to the path of ultimate liberation by first prescribing fruitive religious activities, just as a father promises his child some sweets so that the child will take his medicine.”

Everywhere in the revealed scriptures this has been accepted: according to the audience's capacity, the degree of education should be imparted, extended to them. Otherwise, they won't be able to understand anything. There is a gradual process in the training this is so everywhere; it is true in our common experience also. Progress does not come abruptly but it is a process of continuous development.

## **Saranagati**

**Devotee:** When performing *bhajan* and *kirtan*, what should be our attitude?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Meditation of a formal nature does not have much effect here. We shall try *saranagati* -surrender. Our whole attention should be concentrated on surrender. Once, a gentleman, a zamindar, took Harinama

initiation from our Guru Maharaj and asked, "While I count on the beads, what should I think of in my mind? Is there any portrait of Krsna or Sri Murti? How can I engage and utilize my mind at that time while counting the beads?"

Our Guru Maharaj answered, „The mind has nothing to do in the supra-mental area. The mind is like a vulture. As a vulture goes to the cremation ground, so mind and other senses will try to fall there and make it mundane – a cremation ground. This is all mortal. They have got all mortal experience. The mind, the eye, the ear, etc. – everything has got mortal experience.“ So, whenever you take the Holy Name, the other senses, including the mind, will try to make it a mortal field with their prejudices and experiences of this relative world. They fall on it and make it a cremation ground. Do not allow it. Instead, we must try to understand. „I have got some spiritual sound which is completely different from this mortal world, and that sound will gradually evolve a spiritual figure or colour.“

Srila Jiva Goswami says, after receiving the spiritual sound from Gurudeva, and concentrating on the Holy Name, then, there is a stage of transcendental waiting. How the effects of the spiritual sound will come down to us? We shall go on counting the beads with such expectant attitude. We shall never feel ourselves down in this mundane world, but rather expecting some new transcendental experience at every moment. Then the colour will completely come, the rupa – the form will come – from rupa will come guna, the quality. These will come down from above, from the plane of Paramatma. The ordinary plane of experience, the mental plane, the plane of reason, the plane of soul, the plane of Supersoul – in this way the planes from gross to subtle are there. So, it will come down: it will have to come with my expectant attention.

For example, a particular kind of bird always expects rain – the Cataka. They do not take any water from the ground – neither river nor lake – nothing of the kind. Only rainwater will they take. Similarly, our attitude should be like that. Always in expectation for some transcendental experience, we shall go on searching. First, the sound, from the sound comes form, from the form comes quality; from that relativity, the paraphernalia will come. Then the pastimes will come and we shall find ourselves as a unit in that plane. It is not this mundane self, but my soul has got a serving position in there – in that plane. In this way, we are to be reinstated in our original spiritual position. So, the mind cannot be allowed to engage in its own speculative line in this case.

The line of service is always given in this way: do your service direction from the higher agents and you will be benefited. It is said that raw materials in the hand of an expert can produce miracles. Otherwise, raw materials are useless. So, you have got raw materials – spiritually unrefined – and you want spiritual growth. The higher and proper utilization of those assets is necessary and that guidance can come from the transcendental arena. As much as higher direction will come, we shall be prepared to surrender at their disposal. We shall be more benefited in this super-scientific line. Whatever is done under the direction of the devotees that has got transcendental value – that will be progressive within me. I am leading myself by following the order of a Vaisnava.

Centralization is necessary – we must be Krsna centralized. At present we are already different, partially centralized: but all must be for the Centre. One conclusion – all is ending in Krsna. All is moving towards Krsna's satisfaction. So, this ego must be dissolved and we shall try that within the Krsna Centre. The example is there. This is the positive side. We are to find out within us. So, take the Holy Name and hear Srimad Bhagavatam. There may be dharma, artha, kama and moksa according to its purpose. But when they are performed only for the interest of Krsna, then it becomes bhakti – devotion.

I am not reading this book to attain fame by delivering lectures to the public. In such a case, it will not be devotion to read the book. I am reading the book because my master wants me to do this. This line should be found and should be followed. Whatever I am doing is not for my interest but for the interest of my master. Whatever I do, that will have spiritual guidance which will make it progress towards Krsna, towards the Centre and the Central interest. We shall try to do everything in this way. Otherwise, taking the name and studying the scriptures may also be false – if it is not for the Central interest. Selfish interest may also use all those devotional forms.

Some will be sahajiyas – imitationists, some will be traders and they will each have a reaction. For the interest of the Krsna conception, the imperative necessity – the exclusive necessity – is that we should come in contact with a real Vaisnava who has got Krsna's interest at heart. Wholesale converted to Krsna Consciousness – Krsna Consciousness means Krsna Centered – for the satisfaction of Krsna. Everyone is searching after some separate satisfaction and running after that in different shades of life. We are to eliminate that and accept this – wholesale conversion towards only satisfying Him.

And Who is He? He is svarat, the Autocrat, the despot. The highest conception of the Truth is Absolute good. No consideration of this world can come to that standard. Absolute good is such. Autocracy must be with the Absolute Good, the Holiest conception imaginable. Absolute good has full power there. No law can bind Him, that would be suicidal. Svarat means Autocrat. He Himself is Emperor without apparently allowing consideration for another.

## **Search for the Divine**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The author of a particular book once criticized the intellectuals who wrote about Indian philosophy and a comparative study of world religions.

His objection was emphatic: “They could not approach the Eastern philosophy by the Eastern method. They approached the Eastern philosophy by the Western method and that is considered to be intellectualism.”

Eastern philosophy’s nature and method of dealing is revolutionary. That author also quoted from the Bhagavad-gita as we generally do, concluding the approach be Eastern – from the subjective to the objective in this case.

Otherwise it is all the study of reflection and nothing of the substance – the dealings of the shadow. And to think that by getting the shadow you have got the substance that is self-deception to the extreme. This progress is not upwards. This progress comes towards the lower side. Progress is not in the empirical method – the ascending method. No. Real progress is in the descending method – coming down from the Autocrat Himself.

They must improve their negative character so that the positive may come there easily. Pure negative character means taking leave from all aspirations of this mundane existence. It means, “I have no ambition for any mundane achievement. I am finished with all these worldly ambitions. I am disgusted with mundane achievement. Now I have come to search for something Divine. This

then is the first attitude – pranipatena.

Then pariprasnena, inquiry is there, but never in a challenging spirit of trusting only in oneself and one's past experiences. It is not that by taking the past results and thereby assessing the future, we shall be successful – that is not pariprasnena. Pariprasnena is a very earnest type of hearing with one's whole self to utilize at His command. And the main substance is seva, "I want to live for Him. I am worthless and I am searching to be utilized by Him. There is absolutely nothing so valuable to me as the direct experience of myself. I have finished my life here tending to fleeting fantasies. My prospect is all finished here as this is all worthless living, to live in this world for this world." This is an honest enquirer – pariprasnena.

"Life is worth living if it can be used by the higher agents. I have come to understand this: Service and acceptance will come from the upper side. This is progress. It does not depend on me that is, it is not under my control. He may or He may not accept me: He may or He may not give me admission. It depends solely on Him. Only some degree of surrender from my side is necessary."

It is not that I am the subject and as a master I travel over the soil on this side. This is all an offence. It also stands as an obstacle to my real progress. I am not going to be master of any particular land or plane of live, but a slave, a kind of servant. It is not that I am giving some service and drawing some salary as if I am in an equal position. No, I am not selling my energy. Service does not mean selling my energy in order to get some remuneration. It is the service of a slave. I want to put my ego into the fire. The ego is the cause, the root of all disturbances in my life. It must be reduced to ashes and then, a new life will begin.

In a slave conference, will the slaves try to search for some right to their dealings with the master position? This is a laughing matter. It is ridiculous, especially in Krsna consciousness. It is all autocracy and no law - anarchy. So, this is more difficult to attain. The service is also of this kind. The result of the service I will not accept. I shall accept no salary of any kind. It will all go to my master.

*jivera 'svarupa' haya-krsnera 'nitya-dasa'*

My constitutional position is that I am an eternal slave of the Lord. It is not that I shall get some remuneration by slavery and try to lead a life of independence. Slave does not mean master or owner of anything. No ownership is allowed

there. As much as I shall be accepted as a good slave, I shall find that I have got no ownership in any plane of existence. Ownership, the demand of ownership, the standing of one's ownership – that is the greatest enemy to him, that prospective bhakta – on this path.

If I am the owner of something, some knowledge or some substance, then that ownership should be given up. Whatever I hear from the sadhus, whatever I shall get, that will go to my master. Service of this nature becomes bhakti, devotion. All the nine processes are considered as bhakti, devotion, when they have such qualification. The benefit I shall derive from this culture of devotion will not come to me, but will go to my master. This may seem to be something imaginary to us at present, but it should be the basis of our inquiry. Otherwise, we shall add trouble to this mundane world of shadow – without getting any touch of the reality.

Our Guru Maharaja, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, stressed that he did not like that one will only take the Holy Name, but he wanted that they should also partake in service. A serving attitude must be cultivated within us. The process is to dissolve the worldly ego. The ego is already present there. We do not have to acquire it, only dissolve it. The flow will then come from the higher side and we are fully dependent on that Divine Grace. We have nothing to do as it will come from the higher side. We are only to demand or want that. “I am needy, I am the most needy, I am extremely needy.”

This is what we shall try to accept and understand. This is the nobility of that special teaching of our Guru Maharaj in this age. Through dedication, the Lord will be attracted to you and you will progress by His grace and not by your energy. You are possessed by a ghost. That ghost must be driven out. Then, your normal condition will return.

If we are fully dependent on Him, then whatever is necessary will come automatically. This sort of self-abnegation and preparedness of service is necessary. Whether He is selecting me as a servant or not, that depends on His sweet will. “I have nothing to do but only to try and make myself fit for His Grace. I am the worst of all; I am the most needy and worst of all. I am haunted by so many undesirable objects of the senses. So, I am not worthy. I am the poorest of the poor, the neediest of the needy.”

The negative side is our normal position as we are in this organic whole. Your

position is something like this. The hair can be divided into a hundred parts and then one part is again divided into a hundred. You should think your position like that in this universe. So, you do not want to lord it over because as a result of that, you are suffering. Give up that current forever. Come to the normal position and again you will find that you are not a master, but are in a helpless position. Then help from the upper side will come. This is not a hypocritical attitude, but genuinely, sincerely, you will find that you are helpless.

In the name of bhakti to gather some intellectualism or some mystic power will surely be misleading to us. If we can trace any progress within us, then we are considered nowhere. These things are not trustworthy in the ordinary sense.

One time, two or three celibate devotees wanted to say something to our Guru Maharaj, but they hesitated. Our Guru Maharaj asked them, reading their attitude, “You want to say something to me, but you hesitate to do so?”

“Yes.”

“You say what you have to say to me.”

They said, “We have done service in the mission for more than twelve years but we don’t find any progress. This is what we came to report to you.”

Then my Guru Maharaj said, “Do you say this rightly, sincerely? Sincerely you say that you have made no progress after ten or twelve years?”

They replied, “Yes, yes, of course we sincerely feel what we say.”

Then he asked again. “But is it that you want to abandon the mission?”

They said, “No, we don’t want that, we couldn’t abandon the mission.”

He then said, “Alright, then you are in a healthy position. Go on continuing your duties.”

What should we understand from this? What should we understand in this exchange? Is it very difficult that after ten years of service in the mission, they say that I have got nothing? What benefit can we get from understanding this? The benefit is, “You are saved from the disease that, ‘I got something. I have got something in my possession’ – this is mania!

Nothing can be got here from our position. Everything is in His control. You should look out for that disease – “I have got something.” But they are telling, “But still, I have lost so many years in the mission, and also serving without any remuneration. We are giving our energy and we do not get anything in return.”

And our Guru Maharaja, how very peculiar is this? “Selflessly working without any benefit – then, that work keeps me in a good position. Therefore, I ensure

that you are healthy and not in a diseased condition. You are in top spiritual health because you are working and getting nothing – still, you are giving your service without any return. You are in a good position and you are in the best of health.”

To say that we have got something, that is dangerous. We must work without any remuneration in return. Can you conceive of that? How? Our real progress is made in that line of conquering the organic whole, the Autocrat. And, His nature of progress is of this kind. So, it is not within the jurisdiction of our satanic intellect. Our intellect means satanic – in opposition to God. We do not want to be a separate god here, like so many different devas. Seva, only unconditional service will save us. And what do we want? What are we given? More tendency to serve.

What is prema? What is love? That sacrifice that service is rewarded by more intense hankering for service. A self-giving attitude, that is the remuneration. It will be increased in us more and more. Your serving tendency will be increased. The appreciation of slavery will be increased. If you work as a slave, the appreciation of slavery will be more intensely at His disposal.

Self-forgetfulness is of a dynamic character. Self-forgetfulness in totality demands self-forgetfulness. Then we shall be able to feel the deepest plane, the flow of the deepest plane, that plane of the Autocrat, within us. Our present ego will not allow us to go to the deeper plane, the most fundamental plane of the irresistible flow. It is so subtle, so sweet and we can go, we can reach that destination. Nothing can oppose us. We can attain that fundamental flow. Self-forgetfulness is of such dynamic character.

If particularly we want to look at our progress, then nothing comes within our vision. Whenever we are particular to feel, “What is the consequence of my energizing in this life?” “What is my acquisition after long engagement in a particular duty?” If we want to look for some acquisition or qualification – then we are finished. He loves to come of His own accord. The Lord is not attracted by the qualifications of anyone. No qualification is sufficient for Him, in any case, our so-called qualifications are paltry by His standards.

So, “Die to Live.” We are to die a real death, not as a fashion or imitation. No. Our Ego is really to die. There is no charm in the environment where we live, only dissatisfaction. There is no friendship with any environment except with the

devotees, the agents of a deeper plane who tell us, “We have nothing, we are His property. We may be utilized in any way He likes, taking us to the dignified nobility of our birthright, our human existence. We do not want anything but to be utilized by the Higher if possible. We always feel unfit because of the reaction of our sinful life. However, this process, this path is still recommended for us.

### **Search for the remedy**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Whenever difficulties come in one’s devotional life, he must search for the remedy. If there is any realization, he will try his best to have favourable association. Suppose by accident, one has lost his senses on the street. Whenever his consciousness returns, he will ask his approaching friends, “Take me to my home where they will take care of me.” Whatever little consciousness comes in a person who is incapacitated by an accident, he will say, “Take me to my home. My home is there.” And there again, he may lose external consciousness.

Similarly, whenever this consciousness of laziness creeps within us, we must try to seek out higher associates – devotees that know the value of our tender devotion. They will take care of us like a guardian.

In this line, the devotees are guardians, as they know the value of devotion. Therefore, when I am going to lose devotion, when a little sense comes to me, then I shall try to extricate myself, and progress towards the devotee camp. They know the value of my little spark of devotion and they will take care of me. Only association can help us. When we become helpless, association will help us. We shall try our best to go to that association who knows the value of the devotion we hanker for. How faith comes? That is from sukṛti jñatva sukṛti ajñatva sukṛti. “Wandering in this world, my energy is consciously and unconsciously utilized by the devotees, the agents of God for His service.”

Reality is for Himself and we think we are for ourselves. When an agent transfers our self-tendency into “Reality for Himself”, that produces some sukṛti

in us. This tendency, when accumulated, produces faith, and faith can develop mainly through sadhu-sanga – the association of the devotees and also, the scriptures to some extent.

First, when the child is born, he may not cooperate with the mother, but depends on her. Then when the child develops a little, he comes to cooperate more and more. He cries when hungry. When more grown, then he demands, “I want milk, I want this and that.” Practical cooperation for health will come according to growth, and when under-grown, then of course, he has to depend on the agents of the Lord that are moving here and there. That is automatic.

Jnana-sunya-bhakti is like a department of the government where the pension is being given to those who have got no service and no livelihood, etc. In this way, the agents of the Lord are moving, creating and utilizing the energy of those needy persons unconsciously by putting it in the “For Itself and By Itself” direction. They get something in remuneration and unconsciously that is being developed into sukrti in them. Then, gradually, this comes to faith, service towards the Infinite, the Unknowable Adhoksaja, which is beyond the jurisdiction of our experience. This is substance existing beyond the jurisdiction of our experience.

Knowledge and consciousness descend from above. But all the knowledge of our experience in this world cannot reach or attract that unknown and unknowable region. Unknown and unknowable to us, but many things can exist there which are beyond our reach. So, finite and Infinite live in such a relationship that mainly, everything is dependent on the Infinite. Generally, we find that there is very little chance in life for the finite to take the mercy of the Infinite. So Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur prays:

*vicarite aobi, guna nahi paobi krpa kara chodata vicara*  
Saranagati

“O Lord! If you deal with me according to justice, then I have no hope. For a long time, I have committed innumerable offenses at Your feet. To clear out my past misdeeds, I have come to Your “Window of Mercy” to pray – without consideration of my past or future – that you may please extend Your causeless grace upon this fallen soul.

In this life. I have got no hope. Prabhu! I surrender to You. Whatever You like

You may do with me. I have no hope if you give admission to the “Window of Justice”: I am lost for there is no possibility of my admission.”

So whenever the devotee is praying, it is unconditional: “I have come to appeal for Your Mercy and not Your justice. If you take me in the world of justice, then I am lost. I am sure that only Your causeless mercy – that is without any consideration of good or bad, high or low – can save me. I want Your causeless mercy my Lord. You have a department and I am approaching that department. I find it judicious to come to appeal to that department of mercy. Whatever the offense I have committed in my previous life, please do not consider that. By Your grace, I have come to beg Your mercy and only to beg Your mercy.”

Devotion proper says, “Whatever You like, You may do with me. I am ready. I understand that I am a slave to You. You are the Master and You can do whatever You like with me. You have got every right over me. I am admitting to that.”

This is the way to attain our highest prospect. This has been advised from the school of devotion. To approach that department, you have to surrender completely and you will have a bright prospect. The devotees, the agents of that department, have come to preach to us – to canvass, “Approach that department of mercy and do not go for justice – otherwise, you will be the loser. Surrender completely and when His causeless benediction will come down to you, you will be amply rewarded. Direct yourself to that which has no bounds, no limits – approach that department.” This is suddha-bhakti.

While falling flat at His Holy Feet, we are to surrender. If not, then I am continuing the war against the Absolute. This world of experience I am living in – it means, “I am at war with the Absolute vibration by creating different types of vibrations against the Universal vibration.” These vibrations are coming in contact with one another and are being crushed and evaporated into nowhere – they cannot stand. When coming to clash with the Absolute vibration, then everything – anything – is reduced to ashes. That has got no beginning; it has got no ending.

That fundamental vibration of love, sympathy, beauty and charm may be like motherly affection to a child. Even more than that, it may be the Love of consort-hood in its highest perfection – a twenty-four hour engagement in the “Family of God”.

## Selected Gems

Die to live means sacrifice or seva (service). Seva means death. Seva means to give one's own self for a particular cause, for Krishna. That this mad, mundane concocted self should be saved is not a very laudable thing. It is a mortal thing, and the depot of many reactions. So one should get rid of this centre as soon as possible, and enter into the land of confidence, goodness, fairness and sweetness. Try to enter that land with a sincere attitude. Your campaign must be partial. Taking one step forward and three steps back won't do. There should be no such hesitation. You are finite and you want to get the advantage of the infinite? You are so small, and do you think that by sacrificing only a part of your smallness your aspiration for the whole can be fulfilled? Is it reasonable to expect such? No, it is not so easy.

Our own tendency for exploitation and renunciation creates so many units of this plane, like so much dust to blind our eyes so we cannot see Him. *Kanaka pasyanti kamini mayayo jagat*. Those who are lustful try to find out where is a beautiful lady. *Pasyanti dhana mayo jagat*. The greedy people always busy their minds with the thought. "Oh, there is Birla, there is Tata, there is Ford," who are the moneyed men in this world. They only think about moneyed men because they love wealth the most. *Dhara mayo jagat and khira prayanti narayano jagat*.

Those who are liberated from the outer external influences may find, "Oh, I am in the kingdom of Narayan, who is the support and guardian of the whole world. We see His hand everywhere. Without His direction nothing can move." They may boast that, "I have got such power, I have got such beauty, I have got wealth," but it is all a false show. The real backing spirit is Narayan, the all pervading, all knowing, all good principle. And the temporary external plane is the killing aspect of existence. It is only our prejudices of so many types that have captured us.

So by whatever process we approach the Lord the tenor of our movement should be, if we want a guarantee that it will actually be for the satisfaction of Krishna, that my whole effort depends upon the genuine character of the agent through whom I am rendering my services. If the agent is a false man then my whole

energy is wasted. But if he is a real agent then I must be the gainer through him. If I connect with Vaikuntha through him then my actions will be valued.

Otherwise we may be the loser, aparadha (offender). Nama aparadha, seva aparadha, archana apradha – there are so many aparadhas. It is also written in the scriptures that if service is not done properly, then we are sure to commit some offences against the Deity. Either we will get satisfaction or trouble. Aradhana is the proper thing, and the hateful handling of the holy things is aparadha. It all depends on the satisfaction of whom it is we are serving. So we must be careful.

We must not be overconfident of our previous acquisition – so much I have acquired, my progress is so much. I must not be satisfied with my self-certificate, self-satisfaction, the certificate of my own making. Mahaprabhu Himself said, “I am taking the name, I am showing so many tears in the name of Krishna. But why? It is all a false show na *prema gandho* ‘sti. My crying is only a show to canvas others to see what a great devotee I am.” So much you are to disbelieve your own self that you are a devotee. In this way we must be very careful, very, very careful!

*Kotis vapi maha mune.* Krsnadas Kaviraj Goswami and Narottam Das Thakura were seeing, “The whole world is absolved from sin, but I am neglected, I am left as the only exception. I am so low and ill fated that I am rejected from that most benevolent infinite lila. I alone am rejected. I could not utilize this great fortunate wave.” This should be the real tendency of a genuine vaisnava who has actually come in relation with the infinite. Whenever the finite comes in touch with the infinite his temperament cannot be otherwise. “I am empty, I don’t get anything”, that should be the temperament.

I feel emptiness within me. I can’t get the goal. My life is frustrated. Neither do I get a drop of grace from the Lord, and the World, of course, I have left. So both sides gone. I have no alternative. O Lord. If you don’t accept me then I am undone. Please, just make me the servant of the servant of the servant. Give the remotest connection to me. Graciously give the most distant connection of Yourself to me. Don’t leave me, My Lord. I cannot tolerate the craving for You. This heart-felt, heart rendering prayer must come to the vaisnava devotee of the Lord. Onlookers will find that he has got a peep of the fortune. The charm for the world outside is fully eliminated for that person, from the core of his heart, and in the near future his heart will be filled with the nectar of the grace of Krsna.

Bhukti, mukti spriha yavat pisaci na nivartate. The desire for enjoyment, and also for renunciation or mukti, no engagement, are compared to two ghosts (pisaci). So how do you dare to express that bhakti, real love for Krishna, will descend in your heart? Those two demons are there, and do you think the noble lady of devotion will come and sit on the same bench with those demons? How can you expect that? Have you freed yourself from all those nasty things that you dare to invite the lady of Krsna bhakti to come?

Krishna bhajan is independent of any external form of life. Mahaprabhu says, na 'ham vipro na ca narapati na vaisya na sudro .... Gopi bhartu pada kamalayor dasa dasanu dasa. Varnashrama dharma is just the beginning, then gradually improving we are to go up to the absolute service of Krishna. Without consideration of any law or form, thinking only of service, whatever we do or think or speak, everything should be done for the service of Krsna. That is the standard of real devotion. And mere form may be a little favourable, but not always. The spirit, even crossing every formality, is what is required of us. Our absolute attraction for the service, the beauty does not allow law to have any status. In the beginning they have got some sort of utility.

But when a little advanced they do not care for anything. Only sadhu sanga, adherence to the saint of similar type and a little better. Those who are on the path of raga bhajana, divine love and attraction, find that the only way, the only thing which can guide us is spontaneous desire, laulyam atam mulyam ekalam. The only price is earnest desire and nothing else. Krsna bhakti rasabavita mati, murti kriyatam yadi kuto 'pi labhyate. Ramananda Raya says to Mahaprabhu, "Anywhere you find it, try to purchase it at any price." The pure inclination towards the service of Krishna, the innermost tendency to want Krishna, to get Him, the earnest desire to have Him – a drop of that desire for the divine attraction, anywhere you find it, one must try to purchase it at any price. You may acquire it anywhere. It may be from a brahmana or from anyone. It does not matter about the form.

Kiba ivpra kiba nyasi sudra keno haya, yei krsna tattva vetti sei guru haya. Wherever there is a drop of that divine love, try to get it. And what is the price? Earnest desire for it. No other price but earnest desire, laulyam. It is not to be purchased by any money, or anything else which is acquired by so many formal practices in crores of births. Substance is necessary and not form. Form may be adopted only as much as it may connect me with that higher thing. So, sarva dharman parityajya all phases of duty you perceive as perfect, give up. At once

try to jump in Me, into the ocean of nectar. I am the ocean of nectar.” Try to jump. That is the direct teaching. So our addiction to this or that, to vanaprastha, sannyas, or grhastha has got very negligent value. But the earnest desire, that is to be acquired by any means. That is bhakti proper.

Others try to know about Krishna from the scriptures (sastra). Ramakrishna once remarked that in the almanac it is written that this year so much rain is expected. But it does not mean that if we please the almanac a drop of water will ooze out of it. So the sastra is something like that. The sastras say do this and do that. But that does not mean the sastra will give us the result, too. They give direction, and as much as we practice we get.

## **Sharanagati**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We must try to cast ourselves at the divine feet of the Lord saying, “I am the lowest of the low. I am willing to believe that I am the most helpless. I want the shelter of your lotus feet. Please take charge of me. I am unfit to take any responsibility for my own good.” This should be our humble attitude. We should feel that, “I can’t tolerate this life of independence any longer. I can’t go on. I am disgusted with my life of independence. I want slavery, *jivera svarupa haya krsnera nitya dasa*.

Others may think themselves fit, but I do not think myself sufficiently developed to take responsibility for myself. I am the most reckless, mean, worthless and useless. Please accept me and give me any service at your feet. I can no longer rely on myself. I have come to take shelter of your holy feet. You are my Guardian.” This is sharanagati, to accept Krsna as one’s absolute Guardian.

No process of service can be perfect without sharanagati, and certainly there can be no entrance into the higher domain. As such, sharanagati is the very life and essence of devotion. It must be present in every form of service. Without sharanagati our devotion will only be an imitation of service, not devotion proper. It will only be a lifeless activity. Therefore sharanagati is the first

condition.

If one is unable or does not have the opportunity to perform different types of service in the beginning, but he has only sharanagati, he will get everything in the near future. Sharanagati will give us everything. It is the most basic and fundamental substance in the devotional world. The whole structure of devotional service is based on sharanagati. Prahlada Maharaja says that the whole of Vedic knowledge is based on atma nivedanam. You must give yourself wholly.

You must give yourself to the Lord. The substance of all devotional activity is to give yourself in surrender. Sridhar Swami in his commentary about sravanam kirtanam visnu smaranam has said, that if everything is dedicated to Him then all these things can be recognized as bhakti, otherwise it is all bogus. If I hear, chant, etc. to fulfil my own purposes then it is no longer bhakti. Whatever I shall do, it is for Him. Then whatever will be done will be accepted as bhakti. It is the foundation on which bhakti stands.

Without sharanagati all karma, jnana, yoga will not be bhakti. Bhakti means that the result will go to the Lord. I am a slave to my Lord. I have got no independent personality to keep any independent property. I am wholly His servant. Whatever I shall acquire, everything I own is His. He has got the right to do anything with me that He likes, according to His sweet will. With this feeling, whenever we perform kirtan, or smaranam, etc. that will be devotional activity. When that is withdrawn, everything will go to hell. Just as when the stage, where the dancing is performed, is drawn away, then the whole thing comes down.

Saranagati means self-dedication. Then the activity of the dedicated self will be bhakti. He must do everything on behalf of Krsna, keeping Krsna in sight, having no separate interest. Consciousness of separate interest has made us separate from Krsna. Only when the common interest of everything is with Krsna, then it will be bhakti. Sravanam, kirtanam, etc. are mere forms, not life. In order to have a living devotion saranagati must be there.

Exclusive connection with Krsna means exclusive identification with the interest of Krsna. Since Krsna is not seen there must be connection with guru and vaisnava. First there must be self-abnegation to the extreme and then, according to the degree of surrender one will be benefited. There are particular characteristics of each level of surrender according to the different rasas such as

santa, dasya, sakhya, etc. And in each of these there will also be subdivisions. But without saranagati all are mere formal activities, devoid of the very life therein, and they will be something other than bhakti, other than self-dedication. The land of dedication is what we want, not the plane of exploitation or renunciation.

The criterion is found in the sastra that if we satisfy our Gurudeva we will satisfy Krsna. And if Gurudeva is dissatisfied with me then Krsna is surely dissatisfied. In Puranas we find a good example written there. Lord Krsna is the sun, the lotus is the disciple, and guru is the water around the lotus. If the guru withdraws then the sun will dry and burn the lotus. The lotus will be happy as long as the water is supporting and protecting the lotus. The sun's rays will cheer the lotus, help it grow and give vitality to it. So the position of Gurudeva has been depicted nicely here.

The guru may be seen in different rasas of different types, but not much should be made of the differentiations. According to the situation of my heart his infinite potency may be seen in changing moods, figures, etc. Guru is always there, my guide to the absolute.

Krsna is there within Narayan, but there is a difference in their functions. Similarly Guru is there but with a different function. Thus in Narayan, Laksmi, gopis, etc. we find distinction and non-distinction. The gopis when they are in the form of Laksmi they serve Narayan. And Laksmi, in her inner heart, has got the position of the gopis who are serving Krsna in a particular way. So there is a continual connection between them all, distinction and non-distinction. Both should be maintained simultaneously. We should have respect for the differences, but we must not ignore the inner substance. The relative and the absolute must be taken together. In this way we always have to harmonize both these great teachings – sarva dharman parityajya and sva dharma nidhanam sreyas.

Gaura Hari bol! Gaura Hari bol!

**Specific Service**

**Devotee:** The disciple sees his Guru as absolute, but others may see the same person in a relative conception. So, is the Guru relative or absolute?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Generally, the advice is that in the beginning the disciple will look towards his Guru as the representative of the Supreme Lord Himself. But when he makes some progress and inner enlightenment begins, he will gradually find that Krishna, the Absolute, has a particular system – an organic whole – and He has His potencies of different varieties. According to the disciple's inner awakening he will have fitness for a particular class of service. That will be considered and he will be taken, under guidance, into that particular type of service.

When one sees his Guru, gradually, according to his innate capacity and quality, he will find *dasya-rasa*, *sakhya-rasa*, *vatsalya-rasa*, or *madhura-rasa*. The government grants the service. He will face some examination, some test, and he'll be put in a particular department where he will find his immediate boss under whom he will serve and be guided. That is the general situation and he will find his maximum gain there.

At first the whole system is as if one. Then a devotee will find himself in a particular part of that system arranged according to his fitness and awakening. Then finally he will be posted as a servitor to a particular Guru under whose guidance he will do anything and everything required of him.

At first Guru is seen to be Krsna Himself, and then he will be seen in a further way. Radharani and Yasoda are heading their particular sections, and in *madhura-rasa* the parampara comes via Rupa Manjari to our Gurudeva. There is oneness – unity – but more efficient service may be drawn from a particular point rather than a higher point. Everyone has their particular capacity in service and if they serve from there they will be best utilised. If located in a higher circle for which he has no such fitness, enmity will be created and he will be the loser. Do you follow?

**Devotee:** It is still not so clear to me.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Acharyam mam vijaniyat* (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.17.27) – In the beginning stage we are told that the Acharya, the Guru, is Krsna. Then Raghunath Das Goswami, the Acharya of *prayojana* – the ultimate

goal -, says that the Acharya's position is not that of God Himself, but it is that of His most favourite – *mukunda-presthatve*. Ultimately we find that Krsna's dearmost in the department of His potency, and that is Guru. We have to harmonise between these two approaches.

*saksad-dharitvena ... kintu prabhor yah priya eva tasya*  
(Sri Sri Gurvastaka 7)

In the beginning it is mentioned in the sastra that Brahma means the Absolute as a whole, but by clearer vision we see that there are Narayana, Vasudeva, Ramacandra and so many Form of the Lord. And by even clearer estimation we will find Krishna to be within.

One time when Krishna was in a conference with Lord Balarama and Uddhava, they saw a mass of light approaching them. Then after a little time a figure became visible within that mass of light. Then after the light mass approached even closer, they could see the figure of a male person. And when closer still, they could see, "Oh, this is Devarsi Narada who has come."

In this way from far off you may get a conception of the whole, just as by viewing the Himalayas from a distance you can see many things. But as much as you approach, you will find just specific parts, but with more clarity. And when you actually arrive, you will find your Lord and your friends, and you will mix there. At that time you do not find the whole of the Himalayas, but you are located in a particular position. And there, not with the whole, you will find that the desired end of your life has been fulfilled.

Similarly, when you approach Krishna from afar, He is *sat, cid, ananda* – He is infinite. Then as you approach Him, because you are small, you will be located in a particular position. In this way according to your fitness you will be taken into a particular position of service. There you will engage in whatever service is required of you, and from there you will draw the fullest satisfaction of your nature.

Guru means guide. At first we are guided by attraction to "wholesale" Bhagavan – Krishna – and this helps us to make progress towards him. Then the more we gain, the more the big hazy vision is eliminated and a particular place becomes more clearly revealed. In this way our vision, actions and everything about us will become located in a particular part of the Infinite. And by carrying out my specific duty there, we will draw our highest benefit.

In the department of rasas – santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, madhura – you shall gain admission in a particular section of service according to your capacity. In each rasa there are also so many subsections and different departments of service, and according to your innermost fitness and capacity you shall be given a place there. Ultimately you will be told, “Do your duty here!” and you will see to that duty. Whatever your immediate guide, your Guru, asks you to do, you will do that and thereby receive your best benefit. Religion is proper adjustment.

There are so many Acharyas, even in the Gaudiya Mission. You have come to your particular Guru in the Mission and under him there are many different departments of service. Some are selling books, some are delivering lectures, and so forth, and according to your own fitness you are given service in a particular department. But still you are in connection with the whole Mission. Wherever you are posted you are connected with the whole, but you have your specific duty in a particular place.

You joined the Gaudiya Mission but it is a huge thing, with so many departments, so many Maths, and so many duties, but where is that Mission?

At first it is a hazy thing, a big thing, then after you were admitted you were taken in and placed in a particular direction. Your attention was directed towards some post, you went there and gradually you were given some duty to discharge. The whole of the Mission is yours, but still you have a particular department and a particular duty, and that will increase more and more. It is possible that you may become the personal secretary of your Gurudeva, or a preacher, or a cook for your Guru Maharaj. And some may be asked to go to other places to preach. Sometimes those may be dangerous places for the devotees, but someone also has that kind of duty.

Adjustment is necessary. First there is entrance within a Mission, then adjustment begins. Religion is proper adjustment according to the fitness of the man who is given admission. Do you follow now?

**Devotee:** I follow, but I still have some query.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** What query can you still have?! You will be placed according to your fitness and necessity. Necessity is of different types, and according to your fitness you will be given a particular duty. What difficulty is there in understanding this? Proper adjustment means that you are approaching the infinite, but you cannot swallow the infinite within you. You are detached, you are infinitesimal, and you are approaching the infinite, so you have to be

located in a particular position of the infinite. You are to adjust in this way. You cannot devour the whole of the infinite within your belly. Do you like the idea of devouring the whole of the infinite within your belly? Therefore you have to be located in a particular infinitesimal position, and you will draw the maximum remuneration from that. If you are in some other place you will be the loser. According to fitness, adjustment comes to us. It is quite reasonable, and our duty is to pay full attention there.

## Spirit of dedication

**Devotee:** Guru Maharaj, in the scriptures it is said that in Kali-yuga so many concocted processes will come.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, maybe it is likely. Kali means *kala*, quarrel. Quarrel means clash of many opinions in many interests, Kali. So many interests, many paths will come and they quarrel with one another. That is Kali. Kali means the separatists, they will have the greater field of different opinion.

In Kali-yuga everyone will think himself a model, an acharya. "What I think, I know that is the best." And they will come to quarrel. So, quarrel in an extensive way means everyone thinks that he's perfect, he's the absolute, and whatever he understands that must be. This is Kali.

*kaler dosa-nidhe rajann asti hy eko mahan gunah  
kirttanad eva krsnasya mukta-sangah param vraje*

Sukadeva Goswami tells Pariksit Maharaj: "O King, the age of Kali, the repository of all evils, has but one glorious characteristic: in this age, those who simply chant the Holy Name of Krsna are liberated and reach the Supreme Lord." (Srimad-Bhagavatam, 12.3.51)

Take the shelter in the sound divine. Then also there are so many, "Why Krsna, why not Kali, not Jesus, not God? That is also one and the same." Everywhere

they doubt understanding.

Krsna, the attraction, the affection, that is our solace, the Absolute attraction. That is love. Love is above all, and love must be divine, not this lady love, or fame loving, or money loving, but God loving, conception of God, God the love, God is love. We must try to love one another and to go to the land of love divine. And to differentiate any other things from God from us, that is lust going on in the name of love here, we are to eliminate that. And this money loving, so many loving, love of fame, that must be eliminated and directed towards the unseen, the attractive, the centre of love.

Love means dedication. We try to understand the science of love. As much love so much dedication is for the cause. That is love, the criterion of love is that, dedication, self sacrifice, yajna, sacrifice, to be habituated to give something for others' taste, others' pleasure, that is yajna. Love is the highest and purest and divine form of yajna. Yajna means to sacrifice. The dedication to the whole centre absolute that is to be acquired, that spirit of dedication, and not the dedication to a partial representation.

Bhakti means bhajana, dedication, and not temporary dedication by applying any medicine to forget one's own self. To get an injection or a pill then I am unconscious, that is not dedication. And to have a dream of this and that thing in a sleeping stage, that is also not dedication. Wholesale dedication, standing, awaking, fully awake we must march towards dedication. Dedication for the country is very famous and widely accepted. One who is dedicating himself for the cause of his own country is a patriot. But that is all partial. So dedication is not extended selfishness, dedication is for the whole centre, the all accommodating Absolute. That sort of dedication should be developed within us, and it is already there.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj & Srila Prabhupada**

Conversation March 1977

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The central principle of ISKCON philosophy is surrender, otherwise one will not be able to get to know the substance. Whatever you are seeing externally by means of your intelligence -- that is not going to help you to become acquainted with the real substance.

**Srila Prabhupada:** That Dr. Radhakrishnan [author and one-time president of India] was victimized by Western philosophy. He had no real understanding of Indian philosophy.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** No matter; up to whatever extent they go, ultimately they end up becoming the worshiper of the self. They think that they will become God. The geocentric philosophy is not heliocentric. According to Srila Prabhupada [Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura], they are not heliocentric. They are geocentric. Their limit is only up to their senses. Beyond that, they don't have any understanding whatsoever. Ultimately their goal is Brahmaloka. Brahmaloka is the ultimate goal of these people, and beyond that they don't have any knowledge. The para-bhakti on the brahma-bhuta platform-that when one is situated on the Brahman platform, the transcendental platform, there the pure devotional service begins-they don't have any understanding about that.

**Srila Prabhupada:** But that Radhakrishnan-inwardly he was afraid. I used to invite him from time to time. He used to be quite intimate with me. He used to say, "Please pray to God about me."

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Where did he say that?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Where he used to stay in Delhi. He once wrote to me also, "After I retire, I shall join your movement."

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Sometimes the false prestige spoils everything.

**Srila Prabhupada:** He used to have a lot of respect for me. Once he asked, "Are you writing everything in English?" So I asked him, "What do you do?" and he smiled.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** When he used to teach in Calcutta University, Bon Maharaja used to go to him, and once he took me with him, and before that once he brought him to Prabhupada. So this second time when we went to invite him I went with Bon Maharaja.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Personally he was a fine gentleman. A brahmana, very cultured, but a mayavadi. He is dead now.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, but Rajagopalachari [another Indian political leader/ author] was a Vaisnava.

**Devotee** (to Prabhupada): Your Srila Prabhupada has given you a lot of mercy.

**Srila Prabhupada:** That is all due to your blessings. I do not know for how long I will be able to carry on, so I came to see Sridhar Maharaj.

**Devotee:** If you all go away, then the world will become dark.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj** (to Prabhupada): It is so wonderful that the will of the Lord becomes manifest through someone.

**Srila Prabhupada:** I very much want, Maharaja, that you come and stay at Mayapura. Because Prabhupada always desired that you preach. He told me quite a few times, "Why don't you pull him out?" [They both laugh.] You know, I also tried to some extent before, but somehow or other it did not work out. Now, why don't you come and stay at Mayapura?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** At last Prabhupada told me: "You are an ease-lover. [Laughter] The qualifications - that you have."

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, that's true. He told me also, "He is such a qualified person. Sridhar Maharaj is one of the finest preachers." I want to take you everywhere. At least at the place we have in Mayapura, people are coming from all over the world. Why don't you come and stay there? What is your objection to staying in Mayapura? If you just agree, then whatever kind of building you want, I will arrange it for you. They are trying to build a house for me, so both of us will stay there. And whenever you want, you can come here [to his Navadvipa math].

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, as long as I am alive to fulfill Prabhupada's desire.

**Srila Prabhupada:** This is my earnest desire. Since you could not go around the world and preach, at least stay there and people will come to you. I shall make that arrangement. And if you stay there, then it will be very helpful to me also. Sometimes I need to consult with someone but there is no one. There is no one

with whom I can consult. I feel this deficiency very greatly.

**Devotee:** If he stays in Mayapura, then all kinds of people will get to hear from him.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, that's right.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, people from all kinds of cultural backgrounds will come there.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, they are already coming. And in that house I will make arrangements for an elevator so that you won't have to go through the difficulty of walking up and down the stairs. You won't even have to move a step yourself. I'll make arrangements for a car and a lift. Jayapataka Maharaja is telling me that he will build a house for me. So both of us will stay in that house. Most of the time I am just traveling around, so if you are there, then they can get some guidance. So Maharaja, please-give me the order and I will make all the arrangements for you.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Well, I'll think it over and let you know.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Let me make that arrangement, Maharaja. That planetarium [the "Temple of Understanding"] also will be built under your direction. My idea is to combine the Indian culture and the American money-the lame man and the blind man policy. I tell them also that this will be very beneficial for the world. Indian culture and varnasrama. Prabhupada's desire was to establish the varnasrama-dharma. So we have to do that: we have to establish our Varnasrama College. Let the people from all over the world come and learn about varnasrama.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The effort that you are making to acquire the land in Mayapura-has that been successful?

**Srila Prabhupada:** No, nothing has happened as yet, but we are buying the land. How far one can hassle with the government-of course they haven't yet said either yes or no. But we are buying the land now. They demand a very exorbitant rate, but what to do? We are buying; wherever someone is selling we are buying. When they see the Americans they want a price four times more, but what to do. I feel, let these poor people also have something. They are stealing, but what to do? I feel, let them also have something. Every month I bring one million rupees

to this country and spend it for our development work-about seventy to eighty thousand dollars.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So this is a big income for Indira Gandhi.

**Srila Prabhupada:** That's what I say. With much difficulty I translate the books at night and they print it and sell it and send seventy, eighty thousand dollars every month to me here. Is India benefiting out of this, or losing out of this? Yet they [the Indian government officials] are accusing them [the American devotees] of being C.I.A. agents. [Bhakti Vilasa] Tirtha Maharaja used to say, "The American government has given Swamiji two million dollars." As if the American government could not find anything better to do or any better person to give the money. For making them chant Hare Krsna and dance they would give me two million dollars.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** A man from the Central Intelligence Department took initiation from me. He was asking me [about the American devotees]. I told him, "These are nothing but rumors. I know Swami Maharaja for a long, long time. I know him very well, and his movement is nothing but a purely spiritual movement." Actually, what they are thinking is that previously they [the Westerners] used to send the missionaries, then they used to send the merchants, and then the army used to come and take over. But those days are no more. Though if a net of such a faith of universal religion [as Gaudiya Vaisnavism] could be cast throughout the world, then perhaps that could be actualized in future.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, this study has been quite proper. This is what our plan is. I tell them that, "You work in this direction, and in the future everyone will recognize this movement." The American government is already saying that this movement is spreading like an epidemic. (To his disciples:) Who said this?

**Devotee:** One congressman has said that.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Who said this?

**Srila Prabhupada:** One American congressman from the Senate said this on the television. "The Hare Krishna Movement is expanding like an epidemic, and if we allow them to go on like this, then one day they will capture the government-within ten years."

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** All the governments are becoming alarmed. (Laughter) Even this government, if they [the Western devotees] can conquer the masses and get them to support them.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, that is the fear of everybody.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Ultimately, it may become the "world state" religion.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Automatically it will become so; that is the idea I have.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** America was being accused of trying to make a one-state world so that, "Let there be just one state, and then there won't be any wars. If the whole world is made into one state, then there won't be any wars."

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, I replied to that, "You may make a one-state world. But if you make the populace into dogs, then there won't be any use, they'll just keep barking. You have to make them into human beings."

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, they'll still go on fighting with each other.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Right, that is their nature to fight. So first of all you have to make them human beings; that is the brahma bhuta prasannatma, sama sarvesu bhutesu.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Then, mad bhakti labhate param.

**Srila Prabhupada:** When they come to that stage, then it will be more useful; otherwise there is no hope. It is not impossible to happen.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, when there is a common center, then everybody can unite. Everybody can be harmonized. But that has to be real. If it is fictitious then there won't be any achievement.

**Srila Prabhupada:** I am hearing that the present American president, President Carter, he has some such plan and he is discussing it with Indira Gandhi. He is consulting with Indira Gandhi quite intimately.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, they are accepting our broad policy. From what I hear from the radio and newspaper, it seems that their policy is becoming much more broader than before.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Besides that, they don't have any other way. Otherwise they cannot achieve what they are actually wanting-the peace through the United Nations; that cannot be achieved.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, nothing less than Krsna consciousness will be able to give them that desired peace; nowhere else will they find it.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, bhoktaram yajna tapasam, sarva loka mahesvaram. So that is what I was telling them, that, "Stop fighting and making all those legal suits; then so nicely the preaching can be done in India in every village, every town." One disadvantage with these people is the language, but still, you must have heard, wherever they are going they are getting a very good reception. My Geetar-gan-first I printed five thousand, then ten thousand, then thirty thousand, but this time we are printing one hundred thousand and they are selling very nicely. In Bengali we are printing various books-Geetar-gan, Bhagavan Ekankatha, Bhagavata Darsan. In Hindi also, we are selling many books, like at Kumbha Mela we sold many, many books.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, this is what Krsna consciousness is, and people will naturally wonder what is there in it that captured the whole world in just ten years.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Now that they are opposing it, this is a great credit.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, that's why the governments are organizing the oppositions.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, they are clearly mentioning that, "If they get a chance to expand unrestrictedly, then in ten years' time they'll capture the governments."

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, if the mass is converted and their votes can be acquired, then the government will be captured.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, and these are all young men. The young class of people have accepted it. One scholar, Dr. Stillson Judah, has already predicted that this movement will not be destroyed, because it has entered into the bones and marrows [of Western culture].

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Who is he, where is he from?

**Srila Prabhupada:** He is an American, a professor in the Berkeley University.

### **Srila Sridhar Maharaj's conversation with Jayatirtha Maharaj**

March 5, 1982

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** I want to know whether or not you will enlist me in your service, because my previous service [ in ISKCON] was taken away from me.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It is such?

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** Well, they have given ultimatum that either I agree from today never to hear your Divine Grace's words again, or otherwise I have to leave Iskcon. So, taking the two things into consideration, I decided that I could not become disconnected with your words; that it was easier for me to become disconnected with Iskcon, at least on that plane. I think the Iskcon which Prabhupada started, you are also one of the members of.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** If you give so much stress to his words, then he wanted to make me president. [Everyone laughs] Of course, I remember that. Once, he came and proposed to me, requested me to become president of Iskcon. That he did. Gaura Hari bol. But it is very deplorable to me to think that the so-called Iskcon committee is so eager to go away from me. In other words, I see that they are digging their own grave. This is my sincere feeling, but this hurts, and it is objectionable to a certain extent. But still, I cannot but think so. It was principle they had got, the principle of Iskcon; not the body, but the spirit.

If they are Iskcon properly, they are promised to a particular ideal. So, deviation from that ideal, that is but a shadow of Iskcon, which was created and designed by Swami Maharaj; Iskcon. It is a very lamentable thing. Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare. A sincere soul like you, you have got no room there? It reminds me of when I was a worker in Congress, in the Kalna committee. In 1921 or so, the British government also announced a rule: "Whoever will be in

connection with the Congress committee they should all be captured. Then the bar association of Kalna, they passed a resolution to avoid prison, because the Congress also announced that we shall disobey the law. A law disobeying program.

So the Congress committee of Calcutta composed mainly of advocates, they passed a resolution, that: "To save our Congress committee, we should not accept the direction of the Central Congress to disobey the law." So there was one man who said, "No, I must obey the order of the Central committee and I will court arrest." Then he was dismissed from the local Congress committee. They said, "If you are here within, then we will also be connected with your offense. So, save us, the committee, from courting the arrest, ' and he was eliminated.

Then another sober man in the committee told, "Who is really obeying the orders of the Central Congress committee, he is eliminated, and the bogus committee we have, we are satisfied. Rather, we should resign. We are not bold enough to carry out the order of the Central Congress committee, we should resign. And that man, with his new friends, he will construct a new Congress committee." So, such a sincere seeker after the truth, very simple, and also a strong personality and officiated by Swami Maharaja himself, you have no room, because you cannot separate yourself from myself, one who had affection all through his life from Swami Maharaja. I enjoyed his company also. And I cannot leave my personality, or person, personal realization, that is my own existence, to be flattered by those committee persons. I can't give ditto to their resolution.

Anyhow, it is God's will. Those who are sincere, the victory will be with them. Na hi kalyana krd kascid, durgatim tata gacchati [ one who does good is never overcome by evil. Bg. 6.40 ] Kalyana means sincere to their purpose, not power-seeker; coercive nature, for the administration. Hare Krsna. They consider me as such a bitter hopeless poison?

My association is a virulent poison to the existence of Iskcon? So, such a severe warning against me. My conversations are open to all. They may find fault with what I am speaking that it is not according to the scripture, or in accordance with the advice of the Vaisnavas, it is open. Anyhow, it is all for the best. We have to take that maxim: tat te enukampam susamiksamano, bhunjana evatma krtam vipakam, hrd vag vapurbhir vidadhan namas te, jiveta yo mukti pade sa daya

bhak. ["One who seeks your compassion, and thus tolerates all kinds of adverse conditions due to the karma of his past deeds, who engages always in Your devotional service with his mind, words and body, and who always offers obeisances unto You is certainly a candidate for becoming Your unalloyed devotee." SB 10.14.29]

Whether the society or the Godhead? Whom to select: ya dustyajam svajanam arya patham ca hitva, bhejur mukunda padavim srutibhir vimrgyam [ "The gopis of Vrndavana have given up the association of their husbands, sons and other family members, who are very difficult to give up, and they have forsaken the path of chastity to take shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, Krsna, which one should search for by Vedic knowledge."] We cannot sacrifice our noble aspiration, the inner voice, our spiritual conscience. Under no circumstances should we betray that; should we become a traitor to our inner guide. That is my ultimate thought; we must not be insincere.

We must try to maintain our sincerity, by sincere prayer to the Lord. We are out for Him, and not for any opposition, in His name. The guru bhog is to enjoy, to exploit guru. Exploitation in the name of God, guru, Vaisnava, and sastra; we have also seen this existent, and perhaps now the time has come to make us careful from the contamination of such anartha, undesirables. Exploitation in the name of the Lord. Let us accept poverty and helplessness in His name He is our saviour. And for any other proposal of any alternative wealth or resources, we should not go against my Lord of Heart, Lord of Love. We should stick to that, whatever circumstances may come to threaten us. Gaur Hari bol.

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** Thinking that I would probably leave, they passed a resolution saying that if any acarya leaves Iskcon, then all of his disciples actually belong not to him, but to Iskcon; they are devoted to Iskcon, not to him, and therefore the other acaryas will be free to try to convince them to give up their spiritual master, and take initiation from one of the other acaryas.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** They shall have to take risk by that sort of behaviour; and that will be an atomic bomb to their own disciples. Tamal Krsna Maharaj, I think he is taking a leading part, but that very position, awkward position, the other day, he fell in, and with the same argument which you are putting against them, mostly on the basis of that, he was reinstated. But this effect of changing the faith in their guru, of the acarya, will have reaction in the whole of ISKCON, and will shake the very foundation. Is it a play? What Swami Maharaj began

there, is it a play? The acarya and the disciple, their relation; is it a fun? So lightly to be taken? What reaction will come on the other disciples?

They can connect and disconnect in any way? And the charge was made by Rameswara to me, in the case of a single person. And there was such a great difference. And they are doing in a wholesale way, wholesale dealing. It is horrible to think of the future of ISKCON. Gaura Hari bol.

God save them from such heinous and suicidal steps they are going to take. I can't even think of it. They will go from door to door, and dissuade the disciples Is it a business? Even the mundane merchants, they would be ashamed to take such a step against their competitor. Who was just the other day held in such reverence, you shall be treated like this! I can't think anymore. In Swami Maharaj's words, I am going to faint to think of the future of ISKCON. Gaura Hari bol.

**Question:** What do you think?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** God save the Iskcon from its sure, immediate death. I shall be dumb? What do you think? Suppose I [become] a cipher. [A person or thing without influence or value; a nonentity.] Henceforth, if I don't express myself in any way, if I will become silent, do you think that Iskcon will be saved? At the cost of that? It may be saved?

It is intolerable that the Iskcon which has got so much honor and prestige in the whole of the world; and they will undertake this risky campaign to sever the disciples wholesale from their acarya. Then what will the world say?"Look at them!" They will come with laughter: "A ludicrous thing." Faith; it is a question of faith, and faith is being murdered.

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** I went to the farthest extreme that I thought I could, to compromise. I offered them like this: None of my Godbrothers would have to work on my behalf to enlist any new disciple. Only my disciples would go on like that. That I would agree not to display any picture of your Divine Grace anywhere in our temple. That I would agree not to circulate your tapes to any one of my disciples. And that I myself would only listen to your tapes in private. And that I would keep no picture, even in my own room of your Divine Grace. To that extent I said I would compromise, in order to keep the society in a unified condition. But that they refused to accept; those terms.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** So, you are to banish Sridhar Maharaja from your

heart.

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** Yes.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Won't allow him to enter.

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** Exactly. They told me that exactly.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Even the area of your consciousness. You must keep him out side. Rather cast him outside, throw him outside. Not only that, you will have to preach against him."Join us in chorus."

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** Yes. So, I told them I would be willing to be silent about your Divine Grace, and that I would not propagate the matter, but keep it to myself only, because you mentioned once that my relationship with you was internal, it could be kept that way. But then when they also told me that even internally it could not be tolerated; even privately it could not be tolerated, then I thought, "It's impossible."

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Ramananda Ray, avoiding darsana of Jagannatha, went straight to Mahaprabhu. At Kasinatha Mullik's, Mahaprabhu told Ramananda Raya, when he had come from his place of service, "Have you taken darsan of Jagannatha?" Raya said, "No, no. I have come straight to You." "What have you done? On the way to the Jagannath temple you did not go there? And you have come straight to Me? What crime have you committed?" "I can't help it. My heart took me straight to You, even avoiding Jagannatha on the way. I am helpless. What can I do? I can't help it. I couldn't control my heart. And so the body was carried." Perhaps your case is similar.

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** There's nothing similar between me and Ramananda Raya. They told me, "On the one side is the opinion of all your Godbrothers, and on the other side, only this Sridhar Swami's opinion." So, I took it that, I heard one story once told about how one tulasi leaf . . . that they were trying to weigh Krsna; so much so that the gold of the queens of Dwarka was placed on one side, and on the other side, one tulasi leaf . . .

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Tulasi. Rukminidevi. [Sridhar Maharaja explains the pastime in Bengali. All the devotees laugh when he gets to the point that Jayatirtha made, that Sridhar Maharaja outweighed everyone.

**Jayatirtha Maharaj:** I told them that I would not make a personal attempt to take even a paisa from the institution: neither any building, neither any man, neither any other resource. Whatever came to me of its own accord, I would engage that in Krsna's service; but that I wouldn't fight, or litigate for even one paisa of the whole affair .

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** But I cannot sell my independence, my freedom, my spiritual freedom I can't sell for any price. That was your spiritual consciousness, I cannot sell for any price. I must follow my own conscience, caitya guru, the guru within, I can't avoid His dictation, disobey His dictation at any cost. I must maintain His prestige, who is guiding me on behalf of Swami Maharaja.

Swami Maharaj is living inside me. I can't banish him. It is most heinous. It is a direct offense to the faith, sraddha. The ruling position; vanity. "We are ruler." When the Pandavas after gambling and Draupadi's dishonoring, all these things, when it came that they will have to go to the forest for 12 years, and then one year in an unknown quarter, then they may come and take the share of their kingdom. The decision was made, and the Pandavas they were going to the forest, those five, and also Draupadi following. Their mother Kunti of course was kept in the charge of Vidura, and the six are going to the forest.

At that time Yudhisthira Maharaj was going with his glance earthward, and Bhima with his hands fluttering, [swinging his fists]: "Only after 12 years, I shall satisfy the itching of my hands." Then Arjuna, he was shedding tears profusely. The meaning was that Arjuna, when he'll come back "I shall use weapons in such a profuse way, in a current to take the revenge." Then Nakula, he was smearing the ashes, and that had some meaning, and Sahadeva, he went covering his face with his palms. What was the meaning. He couldn't look. He was the astrologer, Sahadeva, a very good astrologer, and it was said that he could not look at the future figure of the Kurus and Duryodhana.

He couldn't look; he was closing his eyes, seeing a very dangerous future will come in the Kuru vamsa, by the astrological knowledge, he was fully conscious of that, and he couldn't look; cast his eyes look on the environment. He was covering his face. Some feeling like that has come in me and I can't cast glance into the future of Iskcon. I am afraid to look at their future. I feel that what they are doing, what steps they are taking, it is very very deplorable.

The Pandavas were five and Duryodhana's party were one hundred. The

Pandavas were banished from the kingdom by unlawful possession. Jayatirtha Maharaja's sacrifice and sincerity, it is of so high type that this light will show like an X-ray, like a searching light will show the defects in them. His life is so sincere, and so faithful for the cause that it will cast darkness to them, on their face. A man from such a high position; he can leave so easily for the truth, and still, such a man is living!

Einstein once remarked about Gandhi, "A man who does not say a single lie, and who does not harm even a single mosquito or fly, that such a man once trod on this earth, walked on this earth, future generations won't believe it." That was the statement of Einstein, about Gandhi. A single lie he does not speak, never speaks a lie, and never harms a fly. That such a man used to live on the breast of this earth, future generations won't believe it. So Jayatirtha Maharaj, he is so sincere that such a temptible position he was holding in ISKCON, and he is leaving it only for his sincere hankering for the truth. Such prestige, resources, position, and obligation to the disciples, all a risk, single-handed, his ideal will defeat them. Not a single man, but a committee of so many persons who were relied on so much by Swami Maharaja; representing his future good name?

Let the divine will guide us properly in our ways. What should I say more? Hare Krsna. Jayatirtha Maharaja, once more he has become a sannyasi. [Laughter] Leaving everything, Krsna wanted even the gopis to stand naked before Him. Naked, stand before His sweet will. Giving up all sorts of prejudice; undesirable things. [So they have] no practical feeling of the Divinity, but only administration. Administration.

Only mundane administrative tendency. Unconscious of the holy faith sraddha, the divine; meddling with divine faith in such a rude manner. It is not possible. It may not come from the hands of the devotee. Devastation. Hare Krsna. Gaura Hari bol. Gaura Hari bol Gaura Hari bol Gaura Hari bol.

**Surrender, but surrender to whom?**

**Devotee:** Christians say the one Master is Christ.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** They say three: God the Father, God the Ghost, and God the Guru as Christ, the deliverer. Three phases of conception in theism, according to Christianity. And in Islam, there are so many messengers from God, and Mohammed was such a messenger. The Mohammedans accept, mostly, the messengers of the Judaeo-Christian tradition in common: Moses, Abraham and others. But according to them the last messenger of God was Mohammed, and he is considered by them to be foremost.

And some conception of God is there, but that conception is not so much differentiated or developed as we find in Hindu mythology or ontology, or in the Vedas or Upanisads- in the revealed truth, revealed scriptures.

The renowned German scholar Max Muller once told, "What is in the store of the Upanisads in India, that will feed the whole world. The whole world will be fully fed, fully nourished by that; not a point, not a drop of knowledge will be lost, will be missed, if the world can get the knowledge which is stored there." That was his conclusion.

We can understand it in this way: within every phenomenon that exists, there is some intrinsic, central position. Whether in gold, or in diamonds, or industry, or education, or religion within all of these there is a central, original, or most concentrated position, and we may not find that most fully fledged manifestation everywhere where that phenomenon may appear.

So, in the case of religion, or theism, India was selected by God to be in the central or highest position. It is not unreasonable: a university college cannot be established in every village, but some particular place must be selected for that. It is the same for the hospital, the police station, and so on. So in this world, some place was selected to be the highest seat of religion, of theism and that came in the lot of India.

If we have the proper eye to see this, we won't be envious: "Why it should be India?" That thinking is ludicrous, just as someone from the village thinking "Why in our village there is only a primary school, and in that city there is the university college?"

The highest school for theistic education should be located somewhere on the globe, and the place selected was India. If we are to approach the comparison in

theistic education, we should do so with this kind of background understanding. And from that viewpoint Max Muller wrote: "If we look in the Upanisads, we will find that what is contained there will satisfy all classes of religionist, people of any religious inclination- and still the store will not be diminished, even slightly." That kind of knowledge is an eternal fountain: its water is always flowing, the fountain will never become dry.

Wherever the universal truths of religion are found, they should be accepted. If it were not so, then those who are Christians from various nations, for example, the Americans, or the British, they should say: "Christ was born in the Middle East; why should we take his instructions? He was not born on our soil, his teaching has not sprung from our country- why should we accept it?" But the geographical difference is all illusion, maya.

Wherever the real thing, the real religious truth, is found, we must be open to accept that for its own intrinsic value, and not be guided by the physical, mundane affinity from where I have got my body, or my country, and so on. We must rise above all this material consciousness and be a clear student; with complete openness we shall be an enquirer after the truth, from wherever it comes.

The atom bomb was created somewhere, in some particular location, but does that mean that those in other places are not trying to get it, to develop it? Will those others say, "O, it was invented somewhere else- we won't take it"! The battle tank was first invented perhaps in France, in the first Great War now it is everywhere. The rocket was first created in the form of the 'V2' of Hitler, but is now, in its developed form, existing everywhere. And if even here in this world, everything has its universal character and application in this way, should we think that the spiritual world, the world of spiritual reality, will be all of a narrow, national kind of conception? Will the highest truth, which can give relief to all troubles, be relatively located? Rather, that will be the broadest, the most universal. It will be unique.

**Devotee:** But the problem I have found on many occasions, is that when I speak with for example a Christian, he will appreciate the high position of bhakti, devotion, and of surrender, as being even above that of liberation, yet he will insist that Christ is the 'only way'.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** He may accept 'surrender', but surrender to whom?

Surrender may be of many kinds it may be to the family, for the sake of the family, or for the country, for the nation, and so on. But the value of surrender will be according to its criterion: surrender for what?

**Devotee::** Surrender to God.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** ‘God’ means what? What is the conception of God? There is the hazy conception, and the clear conception. We are to come to the clear conception of what God is. We are to come to a very minute comparative study, just as, in the laboratory, the germs and viruses will come under our closer inspection. And the closest inspection will give us the deepest conception. So, what is God? Is it a hazy thing ‘unknown and unknowable God’? Does God mean something unknown and unknowable, and not anything concrete?

**Devotee:** The Christians say, “God is revealed in Christ.”

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Christ gave us something, some conception; but still, that conception is hazy, it is not clear. Just as, for example, with the sun or the moon: there exists a hazy conception about them, but they have their own, real existence. On closer inspection many more astonishing things about them will be seen, and ultimately those heavenly bodies will be found, they will be discovered in their real identity, as they are.

**Devotee:** But the Christians are afraid to go beyond what Christ has said.

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: That tendency is everywhere, at every step it is to be found: wherever a person is, in whatever plane of knowledge, or ignorance also, he is attached to that conception. Such is the case not only in religion, but everywhere it is a tendency common to all.

**Devotee:** These Christians take excuse from the Bible; there Christ says that no-one can come to the Father, except through him.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** This too is a common thing: all peoples of the world have some sort of religious authority. Some people accept the Bible, some the Koran. The Hindu class will accept something else; the tribal Africans also, they have their authority, and again, the Sankarites have theirs. But when a comparison is to be drawn, the people must come out of their local bigotry and approach the matter with an open mind; they will have to come out into the broad daylight, under the open sky, and will have to consult, to compare, to

reject, and to accept. Otherwise, where is the chance of progress? Because whatever the conception in which one is presently situated, he is attached to that; such is the situation everywhere, and not only in religion.

For example, every nation may boast that “We are the first-class military power.” But when the test comes, when there is war, then it is decided who is who! Russia boasted “We have the power to control the whole world”; others also have done the same. In the beginning of the second Great War, Emperor Tojo of Japan said, “We are prepared for a hundred years of war! The Europeans will fight together and be finished, and we will be Emperor of the whole world”. This was his boast but as it was shown, to think something is one thing, and reality is another.

There was one Arabian gentleman who became a devotee. He told: “From the beginning, I had the tendency to go through the religious books of all the nations. In the course of that I found that the Indian religious writers have covered, in space and in time, a huge field the most vast and ancient. In the Bible it is told that the world was created a few thousand years ago; but Indian theology says that so many evolutions and dissolutions have taken place.

So many creations and dissolutions have occurred throughout history the entire solar system has been dissolved, and again created, and again dissolved. And the history of such vast spans of time is to be found in those writings; time has been dealt with in such a spacious way there as compared to its treatment by other theologians of the world. And such a treatment is given not only of time, but space also: the creation of the universe itself, how it was begun, was formed, and is ended; and the history of the great planets, like the polestar Dhruvaloka and the sun.” Both geographically and historically, that gentleman found that what has been given in the Indian theological books is such that nothing can come in comparison with it.

And he was astonished also to discover, how from beyond this body, and beyond this universe, those rsis could gather knowledge; knowledge of such a graphic and spacious nature, collected from the planes beyond the known world, has been distributed by the propounders of the Indian religious scriptures. So that man concluded: “This must be the broadest amongst all religious conceptions.” And he was attracted to search for the Truth through that way.

## Teachings of the four Vaisnava sampradayas

**Devotee:** Srila Guru Maharaj, could you explain in essence the differences between the teachings of the four Vaisnava sampradayas ?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** This has been given in detail in the Gaudiya-patrika, the weekly paper published during our Guru Maharaj's time; here I am giving only the summary, the gist to you. Nimbarka's teaching is known as 'dvaitadvaita'; Madhvacarya's, 'suddha-dvaita'; Visnuswami's, 'suddhadvaita'; and 'visisthadvaita' is Ramanuja's.

Ramanuja's sampradaya is known as Sri sampradaya, it is coming from Sri, Laxmidevi; Madhvacarya's sampradaya is coming from Lord Brahma; Rudra, Siva, is the source of the Visnuswami sampradaya, and Nimbarka's sampradaya stems from Catuhsana, the four Kumaras. Sridhar Swami, the renowned commentator of Bhagavad-gita and Srimad Bhagavatam, belongs to the teachings of suddhadvaita. And the Vallabha sampradaya also springs up from there, it is a branch from the same.

In the teachings of the Nimbarka sampradaya, known as dvaitadvaitavada, both difference (dvaita) and oneness (advaita) between The Lord and His energies are accepted, but that is not qualified as acintya, inconceivable. Mahaprabhu's philosophy is also of 'bhedabheda', oneness and difference, but the necessary qualification is given: 'acintya'. The demarcation between the two - the oneness and the difference - is not in the hand of anybody, it is reserved with Him, with the Lord. Whatever we find, whatever is existing, is, in general, existing as both common with, and different from, Him, the Absolute; but that is not a rigid thing, it depends on Him He can change the line of demarcation anytime, anywhere. The line of demarcation is acintya: where that may be, where it happens one time, we may not think that it will happen that way every time. It depends on the sweet will of the ultimate Reality. So, Nimbarka's 'dvaitadvaita' is very akin to Mahaprabhu's 'acintya-bhedabheda', though with this difference.

Another distinction is that though the object of worship in Nimbarka's line is Radha-Krsna, and up to madhurya-rasa, they do not accept the play of parakiya-

bhava, paramour love. Between the Nimbarka and Gaudiya sampradaya's, the difference is here: the acceptance of parakiya, such as is shown in the 'madhyana-lila, the noontime pastimes of Radha and Krsna.

The Nimbarkas also are more concerned with, more fond of arcana, that is, puja, worship, performed strictly according to the scriptures. The viddhi, the law the rules, regulations is with them the principal thing. But in Gaudiya sampradaya, the strictness of the viddhi is a little slackened, with affection, love, having the better part.

Such a mood of affectionate worship is there also in the Vallabha sampradaya, the line of suddhadvaita they do not like even to use the word 'arcana ', but they say 'seva ', as we do. We speak of seva, that is, raga-marga: that with affection we shall serve, and not according to the strict, scriptural rules. The Vallabha sampradaya, the followers of Visnuswami, have this in common with us, also.

And there is also the 'Ramanandi' sampradaya, which though springing from the Ramanuja sampradaya, is yet a deviation, because we find in Ramananda himself, and later in Tulasi das, a greater rigidity in asceticism. Asceticism has a bigger part in them, and also the tendency towards salvation, towards liberation, moksa.

The four sampradayas also have their respective bhasyas, their commentaries, on Vedanta. Nimbarka has his Parijad-bhasya; Madhvacarya too has his bhasya; Ramanuja has got his own commentary, Sri-bhasya by name; and Visnuswami also has got his bhasya, and Sridhar Swami also follows that line. The Gaudiya sampradaya has got its own commentary, Govinda-bhasya. These are interpretations, different types of interpretation of Vedanta, Brahma-sutra, but all are theistic. These four, and their branches, are all theistic.

There is also Sankaracarya's commentary; and that we call atheistic, because there the jiva soul in it's highest position of eternal service to Krsna has not been accepted. This is similar to the conclusion of Buddha. Buddha says that with the dissolution of the mental body, everything ends. This is what Sankaracarya also says, ultimately: the individual, the individual conception of soul, is imaginary, it is only remaining so long as one is in misunderstanding. When misunderstanding is cleared, one gets liberation and no soul as an individual remains, but a mass of light, and that is brahma, some non-differentiated, non-specified substance. But unlike Buddha, Sankara says that such substance is made of consciousness.

According to Sankara, maya or misconception has no beginning, but it does not go on forever, it may be ended. We can get out of maya; it may be fully quenched, stopped. So, it is anadi-santa,, without beginning, but is endable; and only brahma is anadi-ananta, without beginning or end.

The Vaisnavites say that Sankara is 'Buddhist in disguise'. The Buddhist denies, or does not have any recognition of the eternity of the individual jiva soul, and Sankara's conception is also like that-- no eternal jiva soul. Their difference is, that Buddha had no recognition of the revealed scriptures, whereas Sankara accepted them; but while explaining them, he gave his concocted, imaginary interpretation, and the Buddhistic opinion has been hidden inside that. The atheistic doctrine of the Buddhists is still kept in Sankara's teaching, though under the guise of acceptance of the Veda. In this way Sankara's doctrine is more dangerous than that of the Buddhist.

While instructing Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, Mahaprabhu told him:

*veda na maniya bauddha haya ta' nastika*  
*vedasraya nastikya-vada bauddhake adhika*  
(Cc Madhya 6:168)

"The Buddhists do not recognise the authority of the Vedas; therefore they are considered agnostics. However, those who have taken shelter of the Vedic scriptures yet preach agnosticism in accordance with the Mayavada philosophy are certainly more dangerous than the Buddhists."

The Buddhists are clear: "We don't have any recognition of the revealed scriptures, we are of another opinion our attempt is based on reasoning." But Sankara, though accepting the revealed scriptures, puts his own interpretation into them.

Still, neither Buddha nor Sankara recognise the eternity of the individual jiva soul, as it is expressed in Bhagavad-gita: ...ajo nityah sasvato yam purano "The soul is eternal, ever-existing, ever-youthful, yet ancient." (B.gita, 2:20 ) and, jiva-bhutih sanatanah "The conditioned souls are eternal." (B.gita,15:7) Also, in the Upanisads: nityo-nityanam cetanas cetananam, eko bahunam... (Katha Upanisad 2:2:13)

Here it is told, 'nityo-nityanam': there is one Supreme Eternal amongst many of eternal substance. There are many eternal entities (bahunam') and He is the

principal among them.

In the Upanisads, in Bhagavad-gita, everywhere in the revealed scriptures it is admitted that the jiva is nitya: the soul is immortal. According to Sankara, however, the soul is ultimately mortal: though through transmigration, one will have to accept different bodies according to karma, ultimately, after liberation, any jiva, individual soul, does not exist, neither does God exist. Only brahma exists, a non-differentiated mass of spiritual substance made of consciousness.

Buddha had no recognition of that substance as light; Buddhists say some force of nature, prakrti, is existing, and different manifestations of this force are acting together, producing everything. When that combination is dissolved, what remains is something indescribable it may or may not be a kind of force, it is undifferentiated, indescribable. That is viraja, prakrti-nirvana it is attained when the individual spirit of exploitation disappears into the non-differentiated plane.

## **The Absolute Good**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Sri Krihna is our master. We are not masters of this world. We are parts of the whole, and we have our respective duties towards another plane of life, which is the most subtle. We are in a diseased condition here, but when we become healthy we will have a higher plane of living. This is the Vaisnava conception. There is a higher plane, beyond the jurisdiction of misconception. There is a particular place for me within this universe.

What is that? I am suffering, serving the negative side, and in all conceptions of my life I find suffering. Janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi (birth, death, old age, and disease. Bhagavad-gita 13.9) But there is a conception where life is worth living, where there is something to live for. That position has been neglected everywhere, in so many different conceptions of religious view.

Our idea is paramo nirmatsaranam satam (The highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart - Srimad

Bhagavatam 1.1.2), but their realization is all of the matsara (envious) class. The egoistic school of men cannot give up their idea that, “I am master, I am Brahman.” I am part of that master element, but I am a subordinate part. I am part of the subsidiary element. Still, they cannot think it out. They are matsara, full of jealousy.

That is the root cause of their philosophy. But if they can give up their intrinsic concept of jealousy, and become a little generous, they may come to know of an infinitely higher plane of existence. One must think, “I was created of smaller stuff; only with the help of that higher thing can I improve my condition. If I become nirmatsara (one-hundred-per-cent pure in heart) and Krsna dasa, I can enter into that higher plane, and my prospect is great.”

They cannot accommodate that. Paramo nirmatsaranam satam. It is there in the Bhagavatam, but they think, “If I can become the dictator, then my fortune will be most high.”

A submissive attitude is wanted. If I can become submissive to the dictatorial aspect of that higher plane, then I will be elevated, and I shall get the highest prospect, because that is the Absolute Good. So, where there is Absolute knowledge, Absolute Good, Absolute everything, then why should I not submit to Him? I am in such a vulnerable position, as I have experienced, so it is suicidal not to accept that position of surrender. I am of a lower creation. I find it in every step of my life. I am of limited creation, but at the same time, higher creation may be there. Can I deny that?

What right have I to deny that? Here also I have so much experience of so many things high and low. A hierarchy is there, from the stone to the scientist who is controlling the stone, so what is the trouble in believing that there is a hierarchy also in the original side, the higher side? What is the wrong there? Nirmatsara. But on their side, there is too much equation, the worst kind of equation. (They equate the finite with the infinite.) That is the hindrance to our real progressive life. Mahaprabhu announced, jivera svarupa hay, Krsnera nitya dasa, in naked terms, “You are a slave to that Highest Entity.

This is your innate, natural, intrinsic position. Your self has such a relation with the Absolute.” The Absolute, with whom you are connected, is so high. The All Attractive nature of the centre is conscious love, and you are a slave to that great force of love and beauty. You are so fortunate, you may thank your stars you are

so fortunate, You can be handled in any way by that Absolute beauty, charm, knowledge, everything. You are not connected by force, you are not barred from your birth from entering that domain. You have got your position there. If you want a position there, it should be of what nature? The most subordinate. As much as you have to go higher, you will have to accept the position of a subordinate. It is clear from your own present experience. You should be satisfied with that. Otherwise, like the garbage, you will be cast aside where the rubbish is thrown out, here in this world.

You are so limited, and you have such a high prospect. He is infinitely higher than you, but you have got a position there. Will you not be prepared to accept that honourable position there? The Lord Himself says that if you become a slave to Him, He also becomes a slave to you. What more do you need? What more do you expect?

*aham bhakta-paradhino hy asvatantra iva dvija  
sadhubhir grasta hrdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana priyah*

(The Supreme Personality of Godhead said to Durvasa Muni, “I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of all material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotees, even those who are devotees of My devotees are very dear to Me.”)

Krsna says that independently, I have the position of controlling everything, but this saranagati controls Me. That is the way of affection. Not by power, not by necessity, not by intrinsic experience, but only through love can you enter into that realm. You should be satisfied with that, and what more do you want? The Lord is coming to be whipped by you, and you are not satisfied?

## **The Brahma Gayatri**

Sri Gayatri-nirglithartham

*bhvades tat savitur varenya-vihitam ksetra-jna sevyarthakam  
bhargo vai vrsabhanu-jatma-vibhavaikaradhana sri-puram*

*bhargo jyotir acintya lilana-sudhaikaradhana sri-puram  
bhargo dhama-taranga-khelana-sudhaikaradhana sri-puram  
bhargo dhama sada-nirasta-kuhakam prajna-lila-puram*

*devasyamrta-rupa-lila-rasadheraradha-dhih prerinah  
devasyamrta-rupa-lila-purusasyaradha-dhih presinah  
devasya dyuti-sundaraika-purusasyaradhya-dhih presinah*

*gayatri-muralista-kirtana-dhanam radha-padam dhimahi  
gayatri gaditam mahaprabhu-matam radha-padam dhimahi  
dhir aradhanam eva nanyad iti tad radha-padam dhimahi*

### **Glorification of Sri Gayatri Devi by Srila Sridhar Maharaj**

The meaning of the Brahma Gayatri must come in the same line as the full-fledged conception of Srimad Bhagavatam or equivalent. The Gayatri Mantra and the Srimad Bhagavatam are one and the same. Srimad Bhagavatam is the elaborate commentary of the Gayatri Mantra. The meaning of the Gayatri must therefore come in line with Srimad Bhagavatam. How is this possible? The intermediate steps are supplied in supportive sastra revealing that the meaning of Gayatri is non-different from Srimad Bhagavatam.

*artho 'yam brahma-sutranam, bharatartha-vinirnayah  
gayatri-bhasya-rupo 'sau, vedartha-paribrmhitah  
(Garuda Purana & Hari-Bhakti-Vilasa 10.39)*

What is the meaning of Gayatri? It means in Sanskrit, ganat trayate, “A particular kind of song which gives us salvation, relief and emancipation.” Gayatri is called “Veda-Mata” – the Mother of the Vedas – as Gayatri has produced the entire Veda. The first emanation is the transcendental syllable Om then comes the Gayatri, the Vedas, the Vedanta-Sutra and then finally, the Srimad Bhagavatam – the mature fruit of all Vedic conclusions. The meaning, the purport of the Gayatri mantra is found in the full-fledged conception of the Srimad Bhagavatam. This Krsna conception of Godhead is the highest. Gayatri must give us this meaning. How to extract the Krsna conception from Gayatri?

This is the present objective placed before us. How to extract Srimad Bhagavatam, the Krsna conception, from within the womb of Gayatri? The Gayatri mantra must say that there is Krsna consciousness within her womb and that should be drawn out.

I heard that Srila Jiva Goswami had given such a meaning but I could not find it. I heard that he had extended the meaning of Gayatri leading to Krsna consciousness but I could not discover that anywhere. However, the search itself prompted me to draw the meaning of the Gayatri towards Krsna consciousness and so, I did it in that way.

The general meaning of Gayatri is, “That song which grants us emancipation – liberation. Liberation must have meaning in the positive line. Liberation does not only mean, “to be free from the negative side, “ but continued positive attainment. The definition of true emancipation in Srimad Bhagavatam is positive attainment.

*muktir hitvanyatha rupam svarupena vyavasthitih*

“It is not only to attain freedom from the negative side, but Srimad Bhagavatam gives the positive attainment.” Until and unless we attain “our” positive position, true liberation is not effected. A mere withdrawal from the negative side cannot be said to be liberation proper. Hegel said, “The object of our life is self-determination.” We must determine our normal function in the organic whole. Not mere emancipation from the negative side, but our participation in the positive function which is considered to be the highest attainment for us. This is only possible through service in the land of dedication. This is the true meaning of the Gayatri Mantra.

The word, “Gayatri” comes from two Sanskrit words – ganat and trayate. Trayate means “Positive attainment to the final stage (*svrupena vyavasthitih*)”. We are to take this meaning. Ganat means “Not mere sound, but musical sound.” This musical sound draws us to Mahaprabhu’s *sankritana* that carries the touch of the flute of Krsna. We find Divine Sound and music there. Now we shall analyze what is the Brahma Gayatri Mantra.

*om bhur bhuvah svah, tat savitur varenyam  
bhargo devasya dhimahi, dheyo yo nah pracodayat*

Om is the seed mantra which contains everything within it. Bhur is where we are

– the world of our experience, the world of our sense perception. Bhuvah is at the back of that – our mental acquisition. The effect of our mental acquisition takes us to our present position of experience. It is not by accidental existence that we are here in this world of our experience. We have acquired such a position by our previous karma. And the area of our previous karma is called bhuvah-loka. Bhuvah-loka is the mental sphere.

This physical sphere is only an outcome of that mental sphere. The present world of experience is the product of our previous mental impulses.

Svar means Buddhi-loka, the plane of decision-making. What to do? What not to do? What I like; what I dislike. This is called *sankalpah/vikalpah*. I like this; I don't like that – this is the soil of the mental world of acceptance and rejection. You may like to do something, but you may not do that – otherwise you will be a loser. This faculty or reason is svar-loka. In this way, in this mundane world, there are different planes of existence – *Bhur-*, *Bhuvah-*, *Svah-*, *Mahar-*, *Jana-*, *Tapah-* and *Satya-loka*. The negative side has got these seven planes of life from *Bhur-loka* up to *Satya-loka* where the creator, Lord Brahma, lives. The master of the whole world of experience of the negative side lives in *Satya-loka*. The four Kumaras - devotees who hold high positions as saints – also reside in *Satya-loka*.

These seven layers of the material world, from the gross to the subtle, are dealt with in detail in Srila Sanatana Goswami's *Brhat Bhagavatamrtam*. The negative side, consisting of the combination of the three modes of material nature that produces this world, finishes in *Satya-loka*. Then begins *Viraja*, the verge of the equilibrium of the negative side – the last limit of material consciousness. And the verge of equilibrium of the positive side is *Brahmaloka*, the beginning of the “Land of Service” – the equipoised verge of the positive world.

Then, the world of Reality, the world of dedication and service, the soul's world proper, begins there in *Siva-loka* and continues further in the plane of *Vaikuntha*. The devotee, *Siva*, then *Sri Narayana* in the *Vaikunthas*. In this way, they develop into *Krsna-loka*, *Vrndavana*. The seven planes that are represented in the *Gayatri* mantra by *Bhur*, *Bhuvah* and *Svah*, are summarized in one word – *tat*.

*Savitur* means *Surya*, the sun. Sun means figuratively, ‘that which illuminates all objects.’ This – the three gross and subtle strata of the world – is shown to us by a particular light. What is that? That is *jivatma* – the soul. The sun does not show us the world, but the soul's influence does. It is not the sun, but it is really the soul that shows us this world. In *Bhagavad-gita* we find, *ekah krtsnam lokam*

imam ravih: “This world is really being expressed to us by the atma, the soul which is just like the sun. The sun can show us the colour-world, the ear can reveal the sound-world, the sense of touch can reveal the touch-world, etc. However, in the centre is the soul who gives us an understanding of the environment, the world of perception. This perception is possible only because of the soul. The soul is like the sun as it is showing everything – tat savitur.

To summarize, all these seven strata of our experience are reduced to one word, tat – that. Who is showing us “that”? The illuminator – the sun is showing us. “Sun” here means soul. The soul means not the “universal soul”, but the “individual soul”. The individual soul is the cause of the world. “It is not that the mind is in the world, but that the world is in the mind,” said Berkeley. The world is in the mind. Everything is also in the sun. Whatever we see – that is in the sun. The sun can show us everything. If there is no sun, then everything is dark and we cannot see anything. The soul is light, the subject, and the objects are these seven planes of experience. If the atma – the soul – withdraws, then everything is gone. This kind of consciousness gives birth to the path leading to Goloka.

Varenyam means puja, worshipable, venerable and reverential. Our soul is venerable. The soul is the subject and this world is its object. However, there is another domain that is venerated and worshiped by the soul. This is the Supersoul area. “Bhargo”.

Bhargo means the Super-subjective area where the Supersoul, the Super-subject resides. Bhargo means:

*dhamna svena sada nirasta-kuhakam satyam param dhimahi*

In the first verse of Srimad Bhagavatam it is mentioned that here we are going to deal with another world, by whose rays all misconceptions are brushed aside. In its own pristine glory, it shows the very abode of the Lord. I am talking about that world. So, the subject is the soul, and the object is the world of mundane experience. And the subject’s venerable area that is superior to the subject – the soul – is that Super-subjective area. Bhargo means, “More subtle than the soul, and holding more important position than the jiva-soul.” That is the Supersoul area. Bhargo means in general, ordinary light. But, really it is the Supersoul Who can see and can show everything in more detail. Just as an x-ray can show us what the ordinary eye cannot see, so bhargo, the svarupa-sakti, the higher more powerful light, can also reveal the soul. Then bhargo belongs to whom? It

belongs to Deva, pertaining to Deva.

Devasya means belonging to Deva. What is the meaning of Deva? Deva means, “Who is very beautiful and playful.” That is Sri Krsna – Reality the Beautiful. He is non-differentiated substance, but is full of lila – Divine Pastimes. Deva means beauty and pastimes combined. His domain is bhargo which is venerated by the jiva-soul. What is that? It is the svarupa-sakti, the vaibhava, the extension of Srimati Radharani. She holds the full service responsibility and energy to serve Sri Krsna. So bhargo is no less than the vaibhava, the extended body of Srimati Radharani containing everything for the service of Sri Krsna. This is the Rasaraja-Mahabhava conception. Bhargo represents Mahabhava, the Predominated Moiety, and Deva – Krsna – represents Rasaraja, the Predominating Moiety.

Dhimahi in the Gayatri mantram means, “bhargo devasya dhimahi”. We are invited, “You come and meditate.” What sort of meditation is possible there in that Super-subjective area? That meditation is in the sense of culture – cultivation of service to the Higher by the practice of veneration and worship. This sort of experience is possible there. Dhimahi is not abstract meditation but means Krsnanusilanam – to participate in the spontaneous flow of the current of devotion in that Super-subjective area, Vrndavan.

Dhiyo yo’ nah pracodayat – And what will be the result? The capacity of your cultivation will be increased.

*dasa kare vetan, more deha prema-dhana*

We serve and what remuneration will we get? We will receive a greater capacity with more willingness to serve. What is the remuneration of service? The serving principle, the serving spirit is increased and enhanced – just as interest is added to capital in the bank. I am getting the interest: I do not draw the money but the interest comes and is added to the capital – in this way.

*dasa kare vetan, more deha prema-dhana*

We shall try to cultivate with all our attention towards that plane. We shall try to serve, to dedicate ourselves, and the dedicating principle will be increased again and again. He will give us prema as remuneration. Prema means the special capacity to render loving service. This is the inner meaning of the Gayatri Mantra. The Gayatri Mantra is the song of salvation. This song that begins from

Goloka descends as sankirtana in the middle stages to improve our service towards the highest goal. Kirtana means that which is sun. So, sankirtana begins with the Brahma Gayatri and then comes to the Gauranga stage. It began in Krsna-kirtan, touching this plane and then again, it reaches Vrndavana as the flute-song – kirtana. “The sweet sound of the flute of Krsna”.

The sankirtana of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu reinstates us very quickly in our highest serving position as all are interconnected.

When we enter the area of Vrndavana, there – the sound of the vamsi, the flute, helps to excite and engage the servants in their own respective duties. When the flute is sounded, then the Gopis and other devotees become well adjusted in their respective duties. At night, hearing the sound of the flute of Krsna, the Gopis will run to the Yamuna thinking, “Oh, is He coming or is He going?” When Mother Yasoda also hears the flute, she thinks, “My son is nearby and He is coming home very soon.” In this way, the sound of the flute is engaging the different servants of respective positions to be mindful of their own duties, their service.

*krsna kirtan gayatri-radha padam dhimahi*

Radha padam dhimahi: all these services are represented fully in Sri Radhika: and all others like branches are parts of Her. Madhurya-rasa is the mukhya-rasa, the chief rasa, the culmination of all rasas. In the conception of Rasaraj-Mahabhava, Srimati Radharani is Mahabhava who represents the whole serving attitude of Goloka, the Abode of Sri Krsna.

The flute-song of Sri Krsna is reminding us and engaging us in our service. And what is that service? That service is to surrender ourselves to Srimati Radharani and to accept Her suggestions. The Brahma-Gayatri Mantra will excite and entice us to be mindful about Srimati Radharani’s sweet lotus feet – to obey Her orders. She represents the whole Super-subjective serving area. So, to try to engage in Her service, under Her order, to accept Her direction and to obey Her – that is service to Srimati Radharani. In this way, the meaning of the Brahma Gayatri has been drawn to Radha-dasyam, self-determination – svarupena vyavasthitih.

The partial representation in vatsalya-rasa and sakhya-rasa are also present there in some other way. They are part and parcel of the mukhya-rasa, the chief rasa and they all support this main rasa. In vatsalya-rasa, the devotees will serve

Nanda-Yasoda. In sakhya-rasa, they will serve Sridham-Sudama, but ultimately the whole substance in one conception is included in Srimati Radharani. So, Radha-dasyam – service to Srimati Radharani has been drawn out from the Brahma Gayatri mantra. This is the ultimate end of our life. It cannot but be upward and progressive.

*bhargo vai vrsabhanuja-atma-vibhavaikaradhana sri-puram*

Bhanu means the sun, or who illuminates by light, Srimati Radharani is the daughter of King Vrsabhanu so the word bhanu has been selected. This represents Her personal extended self. Vaibhava means that which comes out as extended self. Prabhava is the central representation and vaibhava is the outer extension. The very gist of the svarupa-sakti is Srimati Radharani and the whole svarupa-sakti, the internal potency, is Her extended self. What is Her characteristic? She is aradhana – Who worships Herself.

She is Sri, Laksmi, the gist of beauty, the beauty and sweetness of service to Sri Krsna. The town, the abode of Her beautiful service is the whole *svarupa-sakti*. Just as rays of light extend from the sun, so the whole *svarupa-sakti* is an extension of the person Mahabhava, Sri Radhika. Rasaraj and Mahabhava – this *svarupa-sakti* – is the extension of Mahabhava. Bhargo means the extended self of Mahabhava. Mahabhava means aradhana (a particular mood of worship that satisfies Sri Krsna), Sri, and Laksmi.

Radharani is also called Sri. Her *sobha* is Her extension, Her beautifully extended self and that is the whole bhargo, the whole area. She is the gist, the essence, and this is the extended self. And what is Her nature? That is All-Serving. She has developed this whole area of “*bhargo*”. She has developed Herself into such a beautiful area of Her svarupa-sakti, and thereby She serves Her Lord, Sri Krsna. They all come out from Her beautiful, effulgent Self. The very gist, the very sweetness is She. Sri Radha in the Rasaraj-Mahabhava conception. This is the inner meaning of the Brahma Gayatri Mantra.

*anyabhilasita sunyam, jnana-karmady-anarvtam*  
(Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.1.11)

“The fleeting desires and the permanent, elevating nature of those who want to become ‘knowers’ and ‘masters’ of everything, is suicidal. To make progress on our knowing and understanding capacity is a waste of energy. So, try to drive out

the ghost – the ego – in different forms as karma, jnana and yoga, etc.” In other words, the lording-it-over tendency must be vanquished.

## **The descent of the Holy Name**

transcribed by Acyutananda das Nabadwip 1976

His Holiness B.R. Sridhar Maharaj sat on the roof of his quarters in Nabadwip (West Bengal). The now very old sadhu was in a contemplative mood, and to approach him in this state disturbed me.

He motioned that I should sit in front of him, so I timidly went and sat down on a grass mat at his feet. There was no one to be seen for miles around. „There are many things to see from up here by which we can remember Sri Chaitanya, „His Holiness said. „We have this Ganges, this forest, the temples, His favourite tree, banana. What have you come here to ask me?“

„Can you explain how, if the Name is a spiritual thing, how is it that we are all chanting it with a material tongue?“ I asked, feeling quite foolish. After some silence he began to speak, „Nitai Chaitanya, Nitai Chaitanya,“ and then he proceeded:

„It cannot be uttered by a material tongue, nor can a material ear hear the Name. He (the Name) is *adhoksaja*, (beyond experimental knowledge), having reserved the right of not being exposed to organic senses. All the experience, knowledge and memories that we have are gleaned with the help of mundane sense perception. Our tongue is comprised mostly of earth and water elements; the nerve endings extending to all parts of the body carry charges of electricity, also a material element. If an object is too far away, it is not touchable, seeable, tastable, etc.; if an object is too close, it is also imperceptible; we cannot see our own tilaka mark or even our own eyelids.

„When the senses are extended by microscopes and telescopes, these instruments have more range, but are still limited to the material sphere. The telescope

cannot penetrate the outermost covering of the universe; the microscope lens is composed of atoms and therefore cannot see the atom or anything smaller than the atom. Likewise, the system of mental speculation is also inefficient to perceive the spiritual element. Mind is a material element whose density is very slight. (Bhagavad-gita, VII:4) Higher abstractions are no more spiritual than hard rocks. There is common belief that by extending the potency of the mind we can conceive of the infinite, but this process is defective. If the infinite can be confined in a limited mind, then it is not infinite. I don't even know how many hairs are on my own head. Mental speculators grind their brains over abstract aphorisms of Zen and Upanisads and think that by their own power they can achieve something like infinity. The result is mental masturbation. The mind explodes and dies of exhaustion. And the reaction is deplorable: total forgetfulness of the self and the infinite.

„There are channels by which the infinite descends. He is all power, glory, beauty, knowledge, wealth and renunciation. He is dominant, all-extending, free, and autocratic. The infinite cannot be contained in a limited sphere, as I've just said, but if He is really infinite then He has the power of making Himself known in all His fullness to the finite mind. When, out of His own prerogative, He takes the initiative and reveals Himself to the devotee, there is actual perception of Godhead, self realization, transcendental revelation. By the channel of transcendental sound He comes, by vibrating the spiritual tongue of the pure devotees representing Him to the world. The spiritual element vibrates the spiritual tongues of the perfect devotee's audience, which have hitherto never been vibrated.

„The pure devotee utters the Name of God. Our material ears hear some sound that resembles the transcendental Name of Krsna; our eardrum moves the liquid of the inner ear, half water and half air, which vibrates the ethereal element and touches our mind. At this point, soul has still been untouched, and there has been no genuine spiritual experience. By hearing with the mind, its impressions, we enjoy the sound of the cymbals, the beat of the chant, the pleasant company and effect of listening and hearing. But it doesn't stop here. Piercing the mind, the original sound uttered by gurudeva moves our intellect, and we consider philosophical and metaphysical truths. For millions of years, sages chanted this on the banks of many holy rivers. Ideas flood everywhere about the possible effects of the mantra. This, while being quite blissful, is not spiritual revelation in the true sense. Beyond the intelligence is the spiritual element, soul, myself. That sound, having cut through all my senses including the mind and intellect,

now vibrates the finest sentiments of my own real existence. This is the perception of the holy Name on the spiritual plane with my spiritual ear. Then, the soul inspired, recapitulates, sending vibration back into the intelligence, mind, and so on, the whole process inverted, out to my external tongue and we say „Hare Krsna.“ That Hare Krsna is He. And we dance in ecstasy.

„Sounds, sounds, sounds,“ His Holiness repeated slowly. „Sounds. Catch hold of the sounds. Seize the sound waves travelling within the ether, and your happiness in spiritual life is assured. One sage has explained in his sutra that massive epidemics are due to contamination of the ether by impure sound. When the lawyers and pleaders in court begin to tell lies in the name of justice, these sound vibrations contaminate the ether, which in turn contaminates the air and water which people breathe and drink, and epidemic is the result.

„When four-headed Brahma creates the universe, the seed ingredient is sound, „OM.“ And from that „om“ the Gayatri mantra is born: in this sound, the fourteen planetary galaxies sprout like whorls of spiralling stars and planets, with the sun situated in the very centre of the universe. Each planetary system is composed of a different sound uttered by Lord Brahma. Each galaxy provides the infinite jivas with their particular spheres of karma, dharma, artha, kama, and moksa. It is the function of Brahma to provide these different galaxies and planets according to the sinful and meritorious deeds of the innumerable. Lord Brahma utters a different sound for each planetary system and his engineer, Sri Visvakarma, creates the planets according to those sounds. The subtle elements and gross elements are distributed in this way. In our planet, the predominating elements are earth and water. In other worlds, only water is found. On the sun, fire is the prominent element. If a spiritual individual, under the effects of illusion, or maya, wishes to end his gross existence, he may enter a planet of air, ether, mind or intelligence and live as a ghost.

„The individual jiva is also endowed with a particle of creative power. And the ordinary individual as well creates his tiny sphere of influence by sound. Some jivas, spheres of influence are no bigger than their own craniums, and some jivas have influence over a community, a nation, or even a whole planet. The beauty and harmony of their particular spheres of influence depends on the quality of sounds they produce.

„When one nation tries to conquer another, the first points to capture are the radio stations, the newspapers, the journals - the lines of communication. By

sending out its manifesto by sound, the government can move the former leaders from their posts and capture the country. Then, also by sound, the new government becomes established. If there should be any defect in that sound, then the whole thing is ruined. That is why there is so much alteration in the world situation. The sound of all these jivas is, to quote the Bible, „Babel.“ Nonsensical sounds are entering and contaminating the ether, the air, the water, and the very molecular structure of each and every person, place and thing. „A person’s mind is composed of two functions, technically termed sankalpa and vikalpa. Sankalpa refers to the mind’s desire to join thoughts into concepts, theories and tableaus of theories. Vikalpa is the mind’s function of rejecting thoughts, simplifying and limiting experiences which are gathered through the senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Both functions are controlled by sound.

Here is an experiment: Close your eyes. When I repeat a number, you will see the number flash before your mind like a cash register.

One....Three....Seven....Four.... The processes of sankalpa and vikalpa respectively make the thoughts come and go. This is a very simple form of the mind’s process. On a more complicated scale, there is the very risky business of intentionally invading the sound waves with defective sound. The lines of communication are filled with impure sound from the earliest of schoolbooks to the most advanced so-called philosophy. The White House filibusters are another excellent example of intentional pollution of sound channels. If we were to infuse spiritual sound into the ether, if we were to saturate the ether with the transcendental sound vibration of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, this maha-mantra would purify, enlighten and saturate every being with its potencies.

„In Sri Chaitanya’s eight verses, which comprise the final message of all spiritual instructions, the first verse gives five effects of the transcendental sound of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra as follows: Ceto-darpana-marjanam. It wipes the material dust from the mirror of the mind. The mind is like the intermediate connecting medium between the spirit and the material external covering called the body. The soul has no material activity. When covered by maya, or illusion, the soul remains dormant in a state of suspended animation. The magnitude of the soul is so great, however, that it infuses consciousness on all sides. Through the medium of the mind, the senses act and we „know“ things. If this „glass“, the mind, is put out of focus by the external nature, we suffer confusion, pain, disease, and death. Yes, death is a state of mind only, as the soul has no death.

By the mind we mistakenly think „Oh! I,m dying!“ „I,m drowning!“ „I,m giving birth!“ „I,m sick!“ etc. When the mind is cleansed by the maha-mantra, the mind is forcibly purified.

All the material concoctions, which are the cause of our suffering, are forcibly murdered, starved to death. They thrive on material sense pleasures. Flooding the mind with transcendental sound is just like stepping on the pin of a bomb: All those misconceptions of material suffering and enjoyment are shattered, murdered, and the material mind is conquered wholly, leaving no enemies behind. The mind then reflects the spiritual knowledge, quality and energy of the soul itself.

„*Bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam*. The fire of conditional life is thus extinguished. Nirvana, which most people are trying to understand from Buddhist texts, means extinguishing the fire of material existence. This body has been burning from the very beginning of its duration by the process of digestion. Biologists all declare that the body is a burning organism, giving off heat, water vapour and carbon dioxide. After seventy or more years, our body is consumed by that smouldering digestive fire, and we move into another body, only to burn up that one too. It is like chain smoking: with the lit end of the cigarette you lights up a fresh cigarette, and on and on. By the potency of the transcendental sound, the cause of that fire is extinguished.

„*Sreyah-kairava-candrikavitaranam vidyavadhujivanam*. The transcendental sound then spreads the light of benedictions, peaceful suggestions and fearlessness, and no more anxieties invade the mind. We approach the world after coming out of the womb with many deep-rooted fears: Is there safety? Is there happiness? Is there peace? The answer is the basic seed. Om in this sense means one big spiritual yes. Om, yes - a positive answer. Simply by negating the mind, the questions of the soul are not satisfied; something positive must be given. The maha-mantra floods the mind with affirmative suggestions of the truth.

„*Anandambudhi-varadhanam pratipadam purnamrtasvadanam*. A full draught of an ocean of blissful nectar is served to the soul, who has been thirsty from time immemorial.

„*Sarvatma-snapanam param, vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam*. This point has a twofold meaning, one external and one internal. Sarvatman means „all souls.“ The holy Name bathes all souls with spiritual bliss, knowledge and love. The

transcendental sound completely overcomes the soul with His sublime potencies. But atman has many meanings, as given by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Atman means the supreme absolute truth, the body, the mind, the intelligence, endeavour, conviction and nature. By uttering the pure sound of the maha-mantra one invades the very cause of everything that exists. The mind, body and soul, and even nature itself can be changed into transcendental nature by one heartfelt exclamation of „Hare Krsna.“ Capture the sound waves which are the cause of every time of existence and saturate them with the holy Name. The result will be the total transformation of energy. An asrama, temple, and all the paraphernalia in them, are all divine. The environment in which we live in the asrama is not the same as the one in which we were born. It is „there“, it is Goloka, and the more we progress in our sadhana the more He will reveal Himself to us.

These truths about the descent of the Hare Krsna mantra were alluded to by Jayadeva Goswami, jagat-guru, who has written a beautiful verse in description of this process: „O Hari Nama, You enter my ear and touch my heart, and tears flow from my eyes and fall to the ground; making soft clay, my footprints are left for my successors to follow my way.“

„It must be noted that if the teacher is bogus, then that Name will not touch the spiritual spark withing the coverings of mind and body. It may sound the same, but it is not ; just as milk and whitewash look the same, but they are altogether different.

„Now many such artificial gurus are about, and this fact is, as it were, camouflaging the genuine devotees. If someone finds a treasure beneath a tree and marks the tree with his initials, he is unable to recall the original tree. This is now often the case, since false holy men are running rampant. But if one is fortunate enough to know the scriptures and tradition, and if one is truly sincere, he will find a genuine sadhu, hear the Name, and begin authentic spiritual life. Then he or she will find a great gift indeed.

„The original sentiments invoked by the Name are concentrated, blissful recollections of the pastimes of Krsna as performed in the spiritual world. These sentiments are in all souls and are five in number, the neutral sentiment, the serving sentiment, the sentiment of friendship, parental sentiment, and the sentiment of intimate love. Krsna is called akhila-rasamrta-sindhu, the ocean of

all transcendental sentiment. In the Bhagavad-gita Krsna says, ye yatha mam prapadyante, tams tathaiva bhajamyaham: „I reciprocate all the different services rendered to Me within the sphere of these different sentiments, or rasas.“ While all of these relationships or spiritual sentiments are on the self-same absolute platform, one may simultaneously acknowledge certain distinctions within them.

„For example, Krsna exchanges loving sentiments with the neutral devotees, who do not take active engagement in His interest, at His own sweet time and liking. If He wants to play the flute He picks it up, and He sets it down when He likes. To His servants, He is the noble master. In this relationship there is more facility to please the Lord, to bring His food, His favourite clothing. Yet there is still some hindrance, since He may tell the servant to be gone, and the servant must obey out of duty. The friendship rasa has two stages. The first stage is friendship with feeling of respect and reverence. Arjuna has this type of friendly relationship with Krsna. He begs forgiveness from Krsna for unknowingly calling Him in jest or for associating with Him without bowing down, etc.

„When friendship with Krsna is more developed, the respect and honourable formalities disappear. Jumping on Krsna’s shoulders, wrestling and playing as though Krsna were their equal, Sudama, Sridama and the other cowherd boys revel in endless sports. Sometimes they even consider Krsna their inferior: „Oh, Krsna, He’s the youngest one of us. He is also the lightest. We can all overcome Him in wrestling, so go lightly with Him.“ As sugar cane juice is concentrated into molasses and then into crystals, so also the friendly rasa, with added feelings, develops into parental affection. „Krsna is my son“, says Mother Yasoda. „I must always look after His needs and protection. If I don’t see Him for even five minutes I get so scared. I see huge trees falling on Him and horrible demons capturing Him. Oh, there You are! Why do You scare Your mother like that? Always stay in my presence; I cannot stand to have You out of sight.“ Even punishment of the beloved is seen in this intimate relationship.

„As concentrated sugar becomes rock candy, so the parental exchange of rasas condenses into conjugal love, in which there is complete dedication to the desires of Krsna, with no tinge of desire for one’s own pleasure. „I am Yours“ - complete, unconditional surrender. „If you trample my body underfoot or embrace me too tightly, for Your pleasure I am happy. If You want to throw me into hell and keep me far from Your company, I am prepared to go. If You forget me, that’s okay, but I cannot forget You. You are always my beloved.“

By this time His Holiness had become exhausted. After forty years of lecturing previous to the use of microphones, his voice had become very thin. We were only one inch apart, face to face. He sat there with his eyes, and it was clear that he was experiencing those things of which he spoke.

Just then the loud gong began to toll in crescendo, reaching four loud blasts and reverberating into silence.

„Go down now. It's time for aratika. Could you follow my words?“

„Yes,“ I said.

„Did you like it?“

„Yes.“

„That's all right. Go down now.“

## **The Divine Realm**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Our real home is an abundance of freedom and comfort. It is a place where there is a natural transaction of faith, love, and affection. It is inconceivable. The scriptures say, „Do not venture to test the unthinkable plane with your reasoning. That plane really is beyond the capacity of your thought. It is under a different set of laws.

Your mathematical calculations and conclusions in this world are acquainted with points, planes, and solids. At present you are a man in the world of solids, and you have some limited association with planes and points in a somewhat abstract way. Therefore, how can you calculate higher things of which you have no knowledge? The ways of living and the laws of that domain are all unknown to you, so you should not try to debate that. That plane is of quite a different nature. Do not rush to bring within your experimental laboratory, those items which are beyond the capacity of your thinking. That would be pure foolishness.“

Higher things do exist, but the general man in this world has no knowledge about them. We are men of experience and have some knowledge, but only to a

particular degree and standard. We cannot venture to calculate what is beyond our reach in this three-dimensional world. But if those who actually have experience of that plane will come to us and give us some information, then we can make some comparison: „This gentleman of a particular experience of ether has written in this way, another gentleman who has experience and has also experimented about ether has written in another particular manner.“ In this way we can gain some understanding from their investigation and their real connection with the subject matter.

In the section of those investigating telescopes, we can make a comparison of their findings. The experience of one researcher with his telescope is of a certain type, and we can also learn about the experience of others with their particular telescopes. With the information available to us from their actual connection with the telescopes and their experiments, we may be able to conclude that perhaps a certain telescope was more powerful, another more powerful in a particular field. So, we have some limited capacity to compare what has been discovered beyond our senses by means of the telescope – even though we ourselves may not have a telescope.

The subject of the higher things discovered by the mental „telescope“, or soul’s „telescope“, has been dealt with in the revealed scriptures. Such subject matter is known by the saints, and we are to take their help in order to have entrance within that land. We are not at present in a position to have experience of the higher plane. However, later, by the help of the saints and sacred scriptures, when we shall ourselves have that type of telescope, we shall be able to have such a higher experience.

Do not let the argumentative spirit overshadow everything. Argument is not all in all: it is not that it must be the resort of every belief. The spiritual realm is inconceivable, but still we are to try to understand things according to our capacity, faith, and realization. Above all, we have to accommodate within our minds that sweetness is sweet, and truth is truth – however strong it may be. But one word of caution is in order: we should not take any standard from here and apply it to that higher realm.

If one has no eyes but another can see, the blind man will naturally seek help from the one who has vision. We are also blind to what is within ourselves. Otherwise, what is the necessity of consulting a doctor? The doctor can see what we cannot: he will diagnose and then we will undergo treatment. Naturally we

shall have respect and will give him something for his assistance. It is not unreasonable.

The divine guide or bona fide guru is the specialist doctor, and we shall understand his or her qualification when we come to see that what he or she says is real – and not imaginary. Such vision will depend upon the degree of awakening of the eye. If one who is blind is treated by a capable doctor, he will gradually directly perceive, „Yes, I begin to see something. I now have some eye experience.“ From that time on, he will not care for the speculative opinions of the other blind people, but he will have his direct capacity to see. With the coming of sight, he can understand that the application of the medicine has had some real effect.

Scientific understanding is also similar. In earlier days when Faraday discovered electricity, many people laughed, „What is this? It is mere curiosity. What utility can we derive from this electricity?“

I once read an account of Faraday demonstrating an experiment to show the effect of his discovery. He generated electricity with a machine and then he showed small pieces of paper being moved by that electric current. Many were satisfied to see his new discovery, but then a lady remarked, „But after all this, Mr. Faraday, what practical benefit shall we derive from this luxury play of yours?“

Faraday replied, „Madam, can you please tell me what is the utility of a newborn babe?“ His point was that when a baby is born we are to take care of him. Then, when grown, his energy will be put to work usefully. Similarly, some consider that God consciousness is only a luxury, a fashion, or like playing, i.e. that it has no practical application or direct utility.

But when God consciousness becomes intense, those who experience it will see that all other activities, however apparently important, have no permanent value. Why? Because ultimately we want to live. We don't want to die. To live is the main necessity and the general necessity of us all. No one can deny that they want to live. And not only live, but live happily, properly, and consciously. Furthermore, we want to avoid all affliction and misery. When God consciousness arises within someone, he can see clearly, „Why is everyone engaged in a wild goose chase in this material world? Everyone wants happiness, but all are running after an imaginary phantasmagoria.“

Happiness can never be produced from mortal things.

We are making a transaction with the mortal world, but that cannot bring satisfaction: it can only lose our energy. What we collect on one side, disappears on another. A person should neither accept nor tolerate this sort of waste of energy as the principle of life. Such a wise person can see another plane of life. They can see that they are not a party to this mortal world that is like the domain of a playground. They will feel, „I am immortal. I am a member of the eternal world but I have somehow become entangled in this mortal aspect of existence.

So, as soon as I can shake off this connection, I shall then stand in my proper, normal position.“

They will find that they themselves – the soul, the feeler, the conceiver – is a member of another soil but they have become entangled within this mortal pain-producing world. Yet still, with the strength of their realization, they can make improvement in their progress to the immortal plane. As proof positive comes before us we shall feel sure, „Now I see these things and hear these things, and this experience is so much more real than the world about me. The world is vague, but what I now see and hear is more real than that.“

A direct transaction is possible with the soul, with God, and with God's land. Where we are presently living is the plane of indirect transactions: first the eye, ear, and other senses collect experience, then it goes to the mind before we can have experience of this world. But in the case of the soul, we feel everything directly ourselves without the help of any instrument, without the intervention of an intermediary.

Through the microscope we see one thing, and through the naked eye we see something else. There is a difference. Through the eye, ear, nose and tongue we have some experience of this world, but concerning the soul, if we can withdraw from the „progress“ in the negative side, we shall be able to feel, „Oh! This is the nature of the soul.“ We shall directly feel who we are without the help of any instrument. So, ironically, hopelessness here in this mortal realm is a prerequisite to hope in the divine realm.

The soul can see himself, he can focus upon himself and through introspection, he will realize his own innate nature. Through the process of introspection, the soul – without the help of any other instrument – will perceive all possible conceptions of himself directly. He will then understand his own soil: he will

gain the conception of a higher type of soil. On that positive side he will discover: „I do not die.“

The material plane is the plane of misrepresentation and misunderstanding, but in the higher plane there is no misunderstanding. Once admitted there, our conception, though it may be partial, will be clear and true. Anyone having that experience will be convinced and he will be determined to go forward.

Socrates could feel that the soul was immortal. He was so intense with his feeling that he did not give any value to his own life in this mundane world. He neglectfully disconnected himself from this world because, with great conviction, he knew the soul to be immortal. Christ also was so much convinced of his Lord that he did not give any care for the happiness and pleasures of this world: he neglectfully rejected it all.

There are many things invisible to this fleshy eye that are visible with the eye of knowledge. We can concede that the eye of knowledge can see many things that the fleshy eye cannot. Similarly, a deep vision exists by which we can see things in a different, more hopeful way: „Come and see!"

An eye cannot see when it is covered by cataract: but when the cataract is removed, the eye can see. Ignorance is like a cataract in our eye that causes us blindness. Our vision is only superficial, but deeper vision can see many things. This eye backed by the eye of knowledge can see many things – deeper and deeper. Our apparent sight has no value. Real value is present in the seer who can see with deeper vision. And all are not equal: there are the wise, the wiser, and even the wiser still. There is gradation, and according to his capacity, the seer will see.

It is easy to see that at present we are members of this mortal world: but by what are we connected? It is our body that is the member. If we can go above the body we can go to the mind, then on to the intelligence, then to the soul. We shall find that the plane where the souls live is eternal, and the soul himself is also eternal. From there we can go on to search after the Supersoul.

The Supersoul is likened to the sun that is the origin of all rays of light. These rays or particles of light are the individual souls – to which we belong. Once we find a ray of light we can approach the sun from which all rays emanate. Similarly, from the conception of our own selves, knowing ourselves to be

particles of consciousness, we can search out a plane of super-consciousness, super-knowledge, and super-existence. In this way we can progress to the Ultimate Cause, the Source from which everything flows. But we cannot go just according to our own whim and minute freedom. Some sort of help and guidance from that plane is indispensably necessary. Such help comes in the form of guru, the Vaisnavas, and other agents of that land. With their help, we can make honest progress towards the goal.

At present we are like monarchs of all we survey, but what we survey is all transient, mortal, and reactionary. What is pleasing today will later turn into pain, therefore we must seek a good position somewhere else, a good place to build our home elsewhere. In the course of that search we shall find that we do have our own home, and it is all-perfect.

In the beginning, we may think that we shall be going to some unknown quarter: „Innumerable living entities are here around me in my present world, but where I am now trying to go, that is uncertain. It seems imaginary and abstract.“ However, when we begin our journey we shall gradually find that almost all existence is in that side, the side where all are truthful. We shall find that this material side is very meager and limited, and here there is only a tiny representation of the truth.

From here, we may think that most of the existing universe is ensconced here and only a very few special souls go from here to the immortal world such as Socrates, Mohammed, and Buddha. But gradually we shall come to understand that the higher world is infinitely greater than the mundane portion we see here. We shall gradually come to understand that, as in a country, a few people are confined to a hospital or a prison and are suffering. Similarly, a paltry few persons are here in this mundane plane to be rectified. As this becomes clearer to us, we shall feel more courage to proceed, and with greater speed we shall run towards our home. Let us go home, and the nearer we are to home, our speed will increase more and more, „Oh. This is my homeland!“

At present, we are outside and our mind is also focused outside. We are helplessly moving. Our hope lies only in the grace of the divine agents. They come to pick us up and warn us. „What are you doing? Do not go on that side. It is the land of danger, the land of death. Come along with me. I shall take you to the land of eternal nectar.“

Those agents come to arouse us from our slumber, our ignorant madness. They are the Vaisnavas, and they have also given the Vedas that give some history of the divine realm and of the saints who have gone there. Through the scriptures, our faith will gradually develop and we shall increasingly keep association with the saints. In so doing, we shall make ever more quickly, intense progress towards our true domicile.

„Home, Back to God, back to home – sweet, sweet, home.“ This sort of feeling we shall find within us if we are fortunate to be allowed a little participation by the grace of the canvassers of that land – the agents of the Lord, the messengers of love divine. We shall be taken to that proper soil and we shall gain some solid familiar type of conception of what our real home is like. In this way we shall progress to that side.

Gaura Haribol, Gaura Haribol, Gaura Haribol.

## **The Ecstasy Potency of the Divine**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We must have the selflessness to admit that He is all-in-all: “Even my existence can be effaced by His sweet will. Although we are told that the soul is eternal, still, He is the Absolute who can efface me.” We are *krta-das* – slave; the master can make or marr us. *Marobi rakhobi yo ichha tohara* – You can keep me, You can do away with me; this is Your constitutional right. I am quite dependent. You can make or marr my fortune, anything you like.

As much as you’ll be able to realize your position of helplessness, so much you are enriching yourself from the real standpoint. You are acquiring a position there. Just the opposite from here – no vanity is allowed there. All humility – humility has got value there. Constitutionally we are in the negative, not in the positive. We have no right, but all right is in His sweet will alone. That is Prema, Love; His grace. Our existence depends on that aspect of reality.

*Sakti* – the female aspect has its particular importance, and not that it will go to imitate the right of the male. That would be her failure. So, there is the ‘predominating’, and the ‘predominated’. If we want to assert our predominating self, then we have to come into connection with Maya, the illusory energy; there we are purusa. But if we want to uphold that tatastha or marginal nature of our own, then we are not purusa; we are of female type, dependent type, or sakti (energy).

In consideration with Him, we are sakti and in consideration with *maya*, we are saktiman, purusa, exploiter, enjoyer. If we seek our relationship with the upper existence, we have to be enjoyed or handled. On that side, subjective existence is there; and here, we come to exploit, to assert; and in connection with maya we can do that. And we are suffering from the reaction. Here in the illusory world, we can assert, ‘We are purusa, we are enjoyer.’ But this is false and reactionary.

So try to develop the attitude of your potency characteristic. If you will be able to do that, you’ll have value on the higher realm. By submission – *pranipata*, *pariprasna*, *seva* – you may be allowed to enter into that domain, otherwise not. You have to be utilized by them, by the interest of the higher land. Only then are you allowed entrance. No exploitation for the jiva-soul is possible in that land. The country of Paramatma, the Soul of all souls.

**Devotee:** Does the false endeavour of the Mayavadis by jnana – this is one type of endeavour ...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** They cannot enter into that domain. They are showing their feats only here within this mundane, up to only Satyaloka. Then in Brahmaloka they merge – finished. They cannot pass through Brahmaloka to Vaikuntha with their idea “so ‘ham – I am a part of the highest entity’”. That idea detains them in the Brahmaloka, and they can never go upward. But by the conception “Daso ‘ham – I am a servitor’”, you will be allowed to enter into the higher level. So, *nirmatsaranam satam moksabhisandhir api nirastah* – these are the authoritative scriptural comments.

**Devotee:** Maharaj, in vaidhi-bhakti, what is the endeavour of the sadhaka (practitioner)?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** To follow the programme as recommended in the Sastra and by the sadhu. Later, one will gradually find himself in the proper soil,

and that he is gaining some ground. That will encourage one to continue his attempt towards that upper realm. It is to be considered when *ruchi* (conscious) taste will come. Up to *ruchi* one must undergo some programme recommended by the *sadhu* and *Sastra*, and one will progress by that help. *Sravana-dasa* (stage of hearing), *varana-dasa* (stage of selection), up to *apana-dasa*, he will take the trouble of practising life or *sadhana-dasa*. When the plane of self-realization or *apana-dasa* will begin, he himself will stand guarantee for his own activity. He will feel it for himself – *Bhava-Bhakti* – and he won't be taken away from that position. He will feel, "I am realizing a novel type of ecstasy." From *ruchi*, the progression is to *asakti* (attachment) and *Bhava*.

We can acquire higher things by service. There's so much to consider. Sacrifice, and have. Pay for it. Not 'pay' in terms of money or such things, but in terms of your own self. Surrender, and have; give, and get. As you give, you can get a similar thing.

*ye yatha mam prapadyante  
tams tathaive bhajamy aham  
mama varttmanuvarttante  
manusyah partha sarvasah*

Effectively, the Lord says, "There is non beyond Me; so even if the people pray for trifling things, I give them those too." So all culminates in His final say. That is His play. "But those who seriously want Me – they, also, have to pay for that." But He is the whole Self. He gives Himself wholly. "He gets Me wholly." As He gives, so they get. Come out with your little capital – you will get Him in return.

**Devotee:** My friend says he's bankrupt.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** It is a good sign to be bankrupt here. Then he will seek some shelter. He is seeking a shelter sincerely.

**Devotee:** He would like to arrange a loan from you.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj** (laughs): This is all loan. I am also in loan – reaction; we are continuing the business in loan from Gurudev. A borrowing business loan. Business on the negative side, all is on loan. Mahaprabhu said, "yare dekha tare kaha 'krsna' upadesa (Teach whoever you see about Krsna), amara ajnaya – I am the Capitalist." He takes the position of a capitalist.

The truth about Maya, illusion, is difficult for us to digest. ‘I am small’ – I don’t like to digest or accept this. That’s the rub. That is my inner evil tendency to capture another’s right. We need to understand what is freedom. We are actually accustomed to think that we can encroach on the freedom of others of the environment. That is the disease. Otherwise, we rebel, “I shall commit suicide. If I cannot freely exercise my will over the environment outside, I shall enter into the grave.” But I won’t accept slavery – a serving attitude to the environment.

We are afraid to become a servant. “I want to be an exploiting unit, but not a serving unit that is bound to give its freedom to another superior hand.” This is where we fail, and this is the inner defect. We understand ‘freedom’ as exercising our right over the environment. Why should we not accept service for the environment? Why? There, we’ll be reduced to the minimum position. But that is healthy for us. To serve others, to become a servant. There we can thrive, by serving the environment, and, especially the Lord of the whole. We think that we are dying if we accept service. That false temperament has grown in us; that is a foreign element entered into the jiva. It is a bitter pill to swallow.

So what is service proper? We may consider the Hegelian philosophy – ‘Die to live!’ ‘Mercilessly dissolve your ego as it is at present. Die!’ Here, ‘die’ means dissolve mercilessly. Throw yourself into the fire; you’ll come out with a bright self. Learn to die as you are – that mentally concocted body or energy, or whatever it is. Take the Name of the Lord and die! Bhaktivinoda aj apāne bhulila. Forget yourself, as you are; and you’ll find your proper self there, that does not die. Death is ordained for our present existence, and we must give that part of our existence to death. And what does not die will remain. Mahāprabhu has discussed physical death in this way:

*sanātana, deha-tyāge kṛṣṇa yadi paiye  
koti-deha kṣāneke tabe cchārite pariye*

“If I could get Kṛṣṇa by dying, I am ready to die millions of times in a second; but that is nothing.” This is physical death is tamasika, a very lower death. The mental death is necessary. Real death is mental death, wholesale. Even then, also, one may only reach the tatastha or marginal stage. But He says, ‘Die or not die, go on cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the company of a sadhu, a Kṛṣṇa devotee. Try to accumulate that internal wealth, however it is possible. Kriyatam yadi kuto ‘pi labhyate.

The internal capital can be had only from the sadhu. Whoever you'll get it, try to secure that innermost wealth at any price. Mere physical or mental death cannot take you to that higher stage. You have to dive deep into Krsna consciousness. Whenever and wherever you find such strong attachment for Krsna, try to secure it from him at any price. That will be the best utilization of our life and energy. To purchase the higher thing.

And that is also at the sacrifice of the higher thing within you – innermost hankering. By surrendering your innermost existence. Such a transaction is there. The physical encasement and the mental encasement is of different types: Bhur, Bhuvar, Svar, Mahar, Janar, Tapa, Satya. These are the gradations of encasements from gross to finer. There many such varieties. Not only that, further there is the Viraja, Brahmaloaka, Vaikuntha. So many subtle forms of consciousness take their manifest forms in Vaikuntha. So most subtle within you is Krsna consciousness, where the dedication is intense to its highest capacity.

And this is dedication to the Autocrat, not to a constitutional king or agent of justice. But dedication to Krsna is to the Autocrat. Anything can happen. The highest degree of dedication is necessary there. The gain is also similar. As much as you can risk, so much you can expect to gain. That is Mahaprabhu's direction. "Don't be a miser. Surrender yourself to the Autocrat, the Absolute Good, and you will be the best gainer." That is His recommendation. Don't be too calculative and a miser. If you find a proper place, give yourself totally.

**Devotee:** *Atma-niksepa?*

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Atma-niksepa. Niksepa (to throw oneself) to a proper place. So Krsna is the greatest bidder, as in an auction. He will pay the most. No one can pay as much as He. He's the highest capitalist. Whimsical, prodigal. Gopendra suta bina teho na sparse anya jan. The highest giver, the highest dedicator is Radharani. No one but Vrajendranandan can venture to approach Her. She is Mahabhava-Svarupini. Sacrifice at its zenith is there in Her.

The highest standard ever is eternally represented there. Sacrifice in self-giving, self-surrendering – beyond all standards ever known to the world of Scriptures. As Laksmidevi has no place near Krsna, so also Narayan cannot approach Radharani, what to sepak of others. Not even Dvarakesa or Mathuresa, not even Gopesa.

## Mahabhava-Svarupini - Sri Radha's unique Sentiment

*sadharana-preme dekhi savatra 'samata'  
radhara kutila-preme ha-ila 'bamata'  
gopi-ganera rasa-nrtya-mandali chadiya  
radha chahi' vane phire vilapa kariya*

All the Gopis are of equal rank in the Rasa Pastimes, but some fine jealousy came only in the mind of Radharani. And after showing Her superiority in chanting, dancing, etc. She suddenly disappeared, after conquering the common Gopis. Krsna suddenly found Himself vacant. The entire source of His energy was from that one point, and that is the theme of His Pastimes. But when that very vitality was drawn away – He found Himself vacant; and searching after Her. He couldn't find Her, and then He stealthily left the company of the Gopis, in search of Radha. Jayadev has said,

*kamsarir api samsara-vasana-baddha-srnkhalam  
radham adhaya hrdaye tayaja vraja-sundarih*

So many of the Braja-sundari (beautiful Gopis of Braja) were on one side, and Radharani was on the other side. They were all abandoned by Him, and He was out searching for Her. In Ramananda-samvad it's also said, a categorical qualitative difference is there in the loving service of the Gopis and Radharani. It is admitted there, as happening in Rasa Pastimes, and Jayadev has also been quoted in this connection.

I also have written a poem:

*yad amiya-mahima-sri-bhagavatyam kathayam  
pratipadam anubhuta chapy alabdhabhidheya  
tad akhila-rasa-murteh syama-lilavalamba-  
madhura-rasadhi-radha-padapadmam prapadye*

In every poem of Bhagavatam there is the presence of Radharani, because that is the conclusion to be established in Bhagavatam by so many tales and stories, and so on. The highest aim of Bhagavatam is to establish Radha-dasyam. So all through, the Bhagavatam is preparatory for that; still, Her Name is not mentioned anywhere in Bhagavatam – alabdhabhidheya. Every word is used only to prove Her noblest position; still, no name is expressly used there. Akhila-rasa-murti – all sorts of ecstasy combined, is Krsna; and the main support of that

akhila-rasamrta-murti is Radhika. She is the only support of the Lila of Syama; the fountain of Madhura-rasa. I surrender myself to the holy feet of that Radharani. She is the gist of the whole life of akhila –rasamrta-murti, Krsna, who consists in Himself of all sorts of high Rasa, Ecstasy. She is His only support.

## **The Environment Is Your Friend**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:**

*sva-dharme nidhanam sreyaḥ para dharmo bhayaṇa*

Destruction in the course of performing one's own duty is better than engaging in another's duties, for to follow another's path is dangerous. That is one stage. There is the relative consideration, and the Absolute consideration.

*sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*

This is Absolute: Krsna says, "Give up everything. Come to me directly." And this is relative: "Stick to your own clan. Don't leave them." That is the national conception. There is nation consciousness and God consciousness; society consciousness and God consciousness. God consciousness is Absolute. If society consciousness hinders the development of God consciousness, it should be left behind.

*guru na sa syat sva jano na sa syat  
pita na sa sya janani na sa syat  
daivam na tat syan na patis ca sa syan  
na mocayed yah samupeta mṛtyam*

What to speak of ordinary things, even the guru, one's spiritual guide, one may have to give up, as in the case of Bali Maharaj, and in the case of sva-jana, own relative, Vibhisana had to give up. Then pita na sa syat, Prahlada's father had to

be given up, and in the case of Bharata, it was his mother, and in the case of Khatvanga, he left the demigods, and in the case of the yajna-patnis (the wives of the brahmanas), they left their husbands, in the endeavour to reach the Absolute Personality. The samaj, the society, is needed only to help us. If our affinity to the society keeps us down, then it should be given up, and we must march on. So many times I have mentioned these things. There is the Absolute consideration, and the relative consideration. When they come into clash, the relative must be given up, and the Absolute should be taken.

So if my inner voice, my spiritual conscience decides that a type of company cannot really help me, then I will be under painful necessity to give it up, and to run away towards my destination, in the direction that my spiritual conscience guides me. Otherwise it will be hypocrisy, and it will check our real progress.

*nahi kalyana-krt kascid durgatim tata gacchati*

If we are sincere in our attempt, then no one in the world can check me, or deceive me. Only we ourselves can deceive ourselves. No one else. We must be true to our own self, and true to the Supreme Lord. We must be sincere.

You have come to fight as a soldier, to save your country, or your people, or your honour. What your environment is, that does not depend on your whim. It may appear in any way, but you have to face that. However complex the battlefield may be, as a soldier you are to approach that. Otherwise you have no real faith in your own cause. There may be so much fighting amongst us, but we have not left the real field. We have not left the preaching of Mahaprabhu, in spite of all the difference.

When I first came here, leaving the association, the main association of Prabhupad (the Gaudiya Math), one gentleman put a question to me. He said, “You call yourselves Vaisnavas, but you are quarrelling with each other, with your own people whom you say are godbrothers, you are quarrelling.” And a man was killed also, so he said, “You are also a murderer.” In this way, he attacked me. I told him, “What is himsa (violence), and what is not himsa? Do you know?” “Yes, we know,” he said. “Have you gone through the Bhagavad-gita?” I asked him, “One may kill the whole universe, and still he does not do anything.”

*yasya nahankrto bhavo, buddhir yasya na lipyate*

*hatvapi sa imal lokan, na hanti na nibadhyate*

“Can you understand this position? One can destroy the whole universe, still he does not do anything. Do you know this? How is it possible? Then don’t pronounce high words that we are committing himsa, and all these things. You see, you are worshipping the deity Kaliji, and what is her posture? She is killing so many people and a garland of their heads is around her neck. Or you worship Shiva, Mahadeva, and he is the destroyer of the world at the time of doom. Then you will go to Ramachandra, you may go to Him. He also conducted war, and killed so many.

You may go to Lord Krishna, He has also killed many. Then who is not a murderer? Will you tell me? Narayana, He also comes as an incarnation, and kills so many. Then what is killing and what is not killing, you are to understand that.” When I put so many examples, kali, Shiva, Rama, Krishna, all killers, and we are worshipping them, then you are worshipping a killer! And you are telling me that I have killed? Then please try to understand what is killing, and what is not killing.” Then that man was silenced.

So there may be disturbances, rather we may say there should be. Disturbance must come, because my most beloved guru has withdrawn from amongst us. Should we like to live peacefully? Such a great curse, as it may be called, is thrown on my head, and should I like to live peacefully? In its retinue, disturbance must come, and we are to undergo them. But we must remain sincere, and we must face the difficulty in a proper way. That has come to train me to go in the right direction.

What I have received from my Gurudev, I understood in a rough way. Now, things have come in such an order that I have to scrutinize myself in every position. I have to analyze within me, atma-niksepa: Self analysis has begun. What I have got from him, I am under examination: in what way have I received it? Properly, or only showingly?

The time has come to purify me, to test whether I am a real student, a real disciple, or only in face, only in confession I am his disciple. What is the real position of a real disciple? Should I live in the society, that is the depth of my creed? In what attitude have I accepted his teachings? How deep-rooted is it in me? The fire has come to test me, to test whether I can stand. Is my acceptance real? Or is it a sham, an imitation? This fire will prove that. So we must not be

afraid of any adverse circumstances: sukhinah ksatriyah partha labhante yudham irdsham. Krishna says in the Gita that the battle you are facing, a happy ksatriya hankers after this.

A bad workman quarrels with his tools. My karma has come to face me, to surround me, and I can't avoid that. It is a result of my own karma, it came from within me. I must not quarrel. I must do the proper thing in dealing with that. We have to scrutinize what we thought we understood more accurately, and find out within me, where am I? What is my real need? And how much is my hankering for the real thing. All these things will be expressed. So, this is the real field of sadhana. My sadhana, my advancement needs all these difficulties. Otherwise, we may not know what is progress.

God has no error. Who is commanding the environment? It is not my responsibility, the responsibility of the environment is not on me. My responsibility is only with me. The environment is in the hands of the Lord. He has not done any wrong to me. If I am sincere, then I have to adjust myself with this environment, and to put my faith before Him. By my stand, in any circumstances, in the battle, my patriotism will be examined, will be put to test, whether I am a real soldier or not. Anything may come, but I have to face that. I am not to forget my Lord, my Guru, my Gauranga, my Radha-Govinda, under any circumstances.

Under any unfavourable circumstances, I must stand with my head erect, and say, "Yes! I am a servant of that clan, that sampradaya. Everyone may leave me, I shall stand alone." With this attitude, we must march. Whatever may be the circumstances. Then the recognition may come in my favour, that, "Yes, under such trying circumstances he is there." They will be pleased with us.

How selfish am I? The anartha in what percent is in me? What is necessary to be eliminated from me? How much mundane contamination is mixed with the real faith? This must come out, and must be eliminated in different ways: na hi kalyana-krt kascid durgatim tata gacchati. If we want real good, no one can hinder us. With this spirit, we must move. We will be able to understand, what is what.

Even Christ told his followers, "One of you will help me to be caught." Judas was amongst the twelve. "Amongst twelve followers, there is one who will in this night help me to be handed over to the enemy." Even this may be possible.

“Peter, you will also deny me thrice before the cock crows.” “Oh, no, no, no, I can’t deny you.” But no pride of a devotee does the Lord tolerate.

He wants surrender, complete surrender. “No, no, I am your firm servant.” That ego also must not stand. Peter, who was the leader, he was also exposed. So, the devotees are only tools in the hands of the Lord. There is a story. A Nawab advertised to recruit a sycophant (yes--man). Previously in the court of the kings, they had sycophants. Whatever the Nawab will say, he will give ditto to that, a flatterer. He advertised that, “I want some flatterer.”

So many applications came. Then he had an interview. He began putting questions to them. He asked, “You’ll be able to do your duty properly?” “Yes, I will be able to do it.” In this way, he was putting questions to different persons. “I think you won’t be able to do it.” All said, “No, sir, I shall be able to do.” Dismissed. When the Nawab asked, “You’ll be able to discharge the duty of a flatterer?,” only one said, “Yes, I shall do that my Lord.” “I believe that you won’t be able.” “I also believe like that.” “No, no, no, you’ll be able, you are the fittest.” “Yes, I am the fittest.” “No, no, I doubt.” “Yes, I also doubt.” The Nawab said, “This is the man for the job.” And those that continuously said, “I will be the fit man,” were all dispersed and rejected.

So, our soul must have such flexibility in the service of the Lord. No ego whatsoever, in the external sense. We have our permanent ego within, when the soul enters into that higher domain. The position of that is a separate thing. But this material ego, that must be dissolved cent-per-cent.

Dronacharya was the weapon-master, astra-guru of the Pandavas. One day while testing the progress of the disciples, he put an artificial bird on the top of a tree. One by one he asked them to come take aim. Yudhisthira came and he said, “Fix yourself to hit that bird. Are you ready?” “Yes.” “What do you see?” “I see the bird.” “Nothing else?” “I see the tree.” “Nothing else?” “Yes, I see all of you.” “Go away.” Then he told another disciple: “Hit the eye of the bird. That must be marked by your arrow. Take your aim. What do you see?” “The bird.” “Nothing else?” “Yes. The tree also.” “Oh, go away.” Then Arjuna was taken in. “Prepare yourself.” “Yes, my lord, I have done so.” “Do you see the bird?” “Yes, I see.” “The tree?” “No.” “The whole of the bird?” “No.” “What do you see?” “Only the head.” “The whole of the head?” “No.” “What do you see?” “Only the eye.” “You can see nothing else?” “I can see nothing else.” “Yes, my boy! Put up the arrow!”

So, we should have that sort of aim in our life. Do or die. Whatever the circumstances may come to frighten me, I won't be frightened. If my own men seem to be the enemy, that does not matter. My own is only Him. And He can not tolerate that any other will be His partner. He is Absolute. He is the Absolute owner of me. He does not tolerate any partnership there. In this way, I am where my spiritual conscience took me. I must follow what I understand, my aspiration. Friends may be converted into foes. Foes may be converted into friends.

But I must stick to my ideal. By His will friends may turn into foes, foes may turn into friends, but for my progress, there must be some elimination, and some new acceptance must be there. If there is to be any real progress, then some sort of elimination, and some sort of newcomers must be there. It can't be avoided. If I am progressing, if I am of a progressive nature, then there must be elimination, and there must be new beginnings, new friends. It can't be stopped in our realization.

When we begin our education in the school or class, all may not pass. They may fall back, and we have to make new classmates, and again go up, and then new classmates, and old classmates may fall back. It is quite natural. But it does not mean that we are envious of them. We are sympathetic. We shall try our best to help them.

### **The Faults You Find May Be Your Own**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We go to judge in the case of others: "Why should he receive all this mercy? He has got so many defects, so many disqualifications, an opposing attitude. Why should he be accepted or given any chance?" But we want mercy for ourselves: "Don't come to judge me because then I have no hope, my Lord."

This is jnana-sunya-bhakti, "If you come to judge me, I have no hope. Please grant Your grace, then I can have hope. I approach You to offer myself to make progress towards You. Please be very lenient; do not find fault with me." But at

the same time, in the same breath, we say, “Why should this disqualified man get any grace? Why will he get some mercy, some affection?”

That is hypocritical and it causes a great deal of difficulty within us. That is suicidal. It is *vaisnava-ninda* (criticizing devotees), and *vaisnava-aparadha* (offending devotees).

Those that are accepted by Him will gradually be purified, but we are very eager to point out faults in them. That is more dangerous for our own progress – suicidal. In my case, I want something higher, but in the case of others we can’t tolerate the same behaviour of the Lord. That is a very difficult position.

Generally that is the basis of *vaisnava-aparadha*. One has been accepted by the Lord, and is gradually purifying himself, yet we give much attention to the fault that is still left, the difficulties still left in him. These faults particularly come to our attention.

Then, the results is that those faults will be transferred to me. These are the realities of the experience in this line: That if I especially mark the fault of another devotee, that will be transferred to me. It happens; in our experience and also from the sastra we have seen this.

So, one must be very careful not to make any remark generally, about the practices and activities of another Vaisnava. Only in the Guru’s case when he is empowered by the Supreme, he may correct his disciples. As the guardian, with a sympathetic eye, he can mark the defects in his disciple and help him to remove them.

There must be some affectionate heart within, not jealousy or anything of that type, but with good will he wants to remove the defects from the affectionate student. That is the sum of *siksa-guru*, or *diksa-guru*. From that position one may detect the fault of the students of this line, and help them sincerely, to get out of that. Otherwise, if we are attracted by those faults, they will come to us, and we shall have to pay for them, as a practical thing. This is based on reason, and scriptural advices.

We must be careful. We are also warned in the Vaisnava literature, that we must be careful about *vaisnava-aparadha*, which comes from the jealous spirit of competition or jealousy. It is very detrimental to our spiritual life, so, we all must be very careful, not to be especially attracted by any defect in others. If it comes to our eye, we may refer to the higher authority: “I doubt that this is the case

with that gentleman, but please check this.” If we make too much of it, either in opposition or in any other way, that effect will be transferred to us. “I am being devoured. My mind is coming in touch with that fault, and that fault is devouring me as food.” It enters into the mental system of the critic, and it must get its satisfaction from there, as a reaction. This is a trade secret – this is also the secret of our devotional life. We must be aware, and we must be very careful about these practical difficulties in the path of our devotional life.

So, we have been cautioned, tat te ‘nukampam susamiksamano. This calculative judgement has been discouraged. Our standard of measuring things won’t stand there. So, jnana-sunya-bhakti, you are to learn a new alphabet here. In the devotional school, we will come in connection with the new alphabet; the old alphabet won’t do. Jnana-sunya-bhakti, give up all the pride of your past experience; your knowledge from experience in the mortal world, won’t do here, won’t be applied here.

This is in the case of infinite, autocratic goodness, all these things. With our mouths, we speak all these big things – absolute good, absolute truth, all these things – but we do not know their characteristics. He may be revealing Himself, and we must carefully note His nature.

*Jnana-sunya*, give up the pride of your own experience, and judgement. It is not like that; there is a new law, here in the land of autocrat, and goodness. The first step is to give up all the pride of our previous experience and begin a new life – *jnana-sunya-bhakti*. The laws of the infinite, not the laws of this finite world, apply here.

As a subject I acquired, but I shall have to enter that domain as an object of the subject. He is the subject, I am the object there. Possessing a particle of the spirit there. And that is also at His sweet will. At any time I may be dispossessed. That is not a democracy, but a monarchy, a dictatorship. To live in the land of dictatorship, and not in the democratic law. Jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva: and to try our best to find mercy, grace, kindness and pity everywhere, because, whatever the dictator is doing is all good. We are to be trained like that.

He is the highest dictator, without fault. We may or may not understand, but it must be helpful for us – whatever is commanded by the dictator. There is no law on which we shall base our judgement, and give remark.

Our remark is absolutely not only useless, but it is faulty, injurious. Such consciousness we are to acquire, and it is not unreasonable - jnane prayasa. Newton said, "I am collecting only pebbles on the shore of the ocean of knowledge." He was a man of this world. Still, he had the sincerity and courage for this statement: "Knowledge is an infinite ocean; and I am on the shore collecting some pebbles."

So, even in reference to the knowledge of this world, if it can be stated, what to speak of that knowledge of infinite, unknown and unknowable. Unknown and unknowable. We must have courage. Just like Columbus, he brought his ships to the shore of America. He had the courage. We have to float our little boat in the ocean of the unknown and unknowable. And the laws will be of that type. The laws of the higher ocean, that may not be applied in the strait, or in the local sea.

A thoroughly new thing we are to study – the revealed truth. If we go to measure the infinite with the law of the finite, then it will be hopeless for us to try. We are to invite, think purely of that land, that standard, of the unknown world. One devotee says, in Bhagavatam:

*svayam samuttirya sudustaram dyuman  
bhavarnavam bhimam adabhra-sauhrdah  
bhavat-padambhoruha-navam atra te  
nidhaya atah sad-anugraho bhavan*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.31)

The saints have crossed that insurmountable ocean, that dreadful ocean with dreadful waves and so many aquatic animals. By Your grace they cross that ocean, then again send back that boat, the boat which is compared with the lotus feet of the Lord. By the help of Your lotus feet they cross that ocean, by the grace of Your holy feet. Again that boat they send back here, for others to cross the same ocean. They give us their experience about the ocean, how, and which way they crossed, and what difficulty they had, and where. Your devotees are so magnanimous, after using the boat of Your holy feet, to cross, they again send it back for us.

Because their friendship for the people is very clean and pure, You are always in favour of those devotees. So, my request, You can't refuse. You allow Your lotus feet again to come this side, and take others across.

Knowledge is our enemy, because knowledge in this world is misleading, the basis is misleading. However spacious it may be, it is a negligible part of the infinite. All misleading, misrepresentations we have collected, gathered, pushed in our brain, all full of maya, misunderstanding. They are our enemies, we have to clear them up, and replace them with fresh things, which are indented from the other world, by pure sources. But the theoretical thing is one, and the practical thing another.

Srila Rupa Goswami says in Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.1.36),

*jnanath sulabha muktir bhuktir yajnatipunyatah  
seyam sadhana-sahasrair hari-bhakti-sudurlabha*

By cultivating our knowledge of soul, we can easily attain mukti, that is, emancipation or liberation from this miscalculation. Though it is not so easy, still comparatively – easily one can renounce everything, considering the wicked nature of the environment. Elimination, elimination, elimination – all elimination. Then, just to reach a thing like sound sleep, that is mukti: permanent sound sleep. We can gather our objects of enjoyment by *yajna* – altruistic action. If we take altruistic action, then as a reaction, it will come back to us for our satisfaction, our pleasure.

But our real devotion to Hari is not so easy. *Sadhana-sahasrair*, a thousand types of aspirations and practices, still it is sudurlabha – may or may not be acquired. Because, that is friendship with the autocracy, the acquirement of friendship with the autocracy. Our enjoyment, that is labour and leave. If we give some labour, loan to another, that may come back to us. So, by the help of our labour, and the distribution of that labour, we can easily get future enjoyment.

And also by practicing our disgust, our sincere disgust with the present moral environment, we can encourage our ego towards salvation, towards complete renunciation, by cutting off all connection with the environment. Just like sound sleep, samadhi. But to have affectionate connection with the autocratic infinite, that is rarely acquired, hari-bhakti-sudurlabha. And the gradual process of how one can acquire that, that is also traced in the Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu of Rupa Goswami:

*klesaghni subhada moksa-laghuta-krt sudurlabha  
sandrananda-visesatma sri-krsnakarsini ca sa  
(Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.1.17)*

If we come in the line of devotion proper, the first result we shall experience is klesaghni: that all the afflicting tendencies in our mind, gradually diminish. Then, subhada, so many things, the proposal of subtle, finer happiness will come, perhaps to deceive us from this path. Moksa-laghuta-krt: the third result we shall trace is that mukti, mere renunciation, the result of renunciation, that is, relief from the negative side, is being considered to be a very small achievement. The mere withdrawal from the negative side is not much. This consciousness will awake within you.

Sudurlabha, if we can only feel, or experience that the goal of renunciation is not much, of a lower order, then will we get bhakti? No, not for certain. There is no guarantee. It is still far from us.

Sandrananda-visesatma, then if somehow by chance we come in connection with that thing, with that reality, then we will find some fundamental awakening of happiness. That infinite happiness is approaching us, coming towards us. Sri-krsnakarsini ca sa. If we can continue our devotional activity in a proper line, then we will find, that He is coming to us as Krsna Himself. In the conception of Krsna consciousness, the Krsna concept, He is coming to you – as Krsna. Krsna means the embodiment of all desirable types of ecstasy, in full. That is approaching .... Or we are being allowed to have His nearer conception for the fulfilment of our devotional activities in life. In this way, things progress.

Die to live! Dive deep into reality! *Jnana-sunya-bhakti* – that is the world of surrender, the area, of surrender is so high, noble, great, and fulfilling. That can come; that only can take us to the plane of love, affection. We hope to see and to live in that plane of affection and love. Not only this mundane affection and love, but the love of the absolute. Then, complete surrender; at His disposal – at His mercy – complete surrender to His mercy is required.

The reaction comes as love. Your highest contribution of faith towards Him, then He will be awakened, and will come to accept you, in His lap. So, no risk – no gain. And risk towards the whole, devotion proper. Not the sum total of some activities, or some sort of studies, no. Practically it is concerned with the soul, the inner existence of us. Giving and taking must take place from the innermost part of our heart, to play with that thing. Not superficial knowledge, or this bodily labour, or mental labour. They are all superficial. The dealing of the heart-to-heart, and that is wholesale, because there is no immeasurable world, and no death: eternal.

So, jnane prayasam udapasya. Our moha, our mania for knowledge, and for worldly energy – bodily or mental energy, and the knowledge about so many falsified things, we are proud of that in this world. But He can withdraw everything. The scientist has discovered, invented a particular law, but if He will withdraw from there, it will be nowhere. It is backed by His will.

So many things are there. “Let there be water; there was water. Let there be light; there was light.” If we can find some faith in this, then, what? Everything is designed and destined by Him. So, what is the utility of some provisional incident? He can make or mar. The law may be changed into opposite, by His sweet will.

The origin of the world is such an independent designer, like a great hallucination master, magician, or hypnotist. Hypnotism is also a very negligent part. The greatest hypnotist – everything depends on His mental strength. He can show anything and everything.

The blind Dhrtarastra ordered Him, “You remove my blindness; I’d like to see Your great, noble figure that others are seeing.”

“No, no. Blindness is not necessary to be removed. Only I say it, and you will see Me.” Without His removing the blindness, Dhrtarastra saw, by His will, He ordered: “Yes. You can see Me with blindness.” Being blind he could see. Then, what sort of sight is He? So eyes are not indispensable to see Him. Or our mental preparation backing up the eye; that is also not needed. He ordered, “You see Me,” and he (Dhrtarastra) could see without eyes. Without the mentality of sight, he could see. He was janmandha, blind from birth. He had no idea of any colour, any figure; because he was janmandha – born blind. But still, he could see, by His order. His position is such.

And if we try to approach Him, then what sort of attitude, or mentality we should have? With earnestness we shall approach Him. What will be the fare to make journey towards that land? It is easy; it is difficult. Easy because it is our in-born tendency from within, it is home. But now we are far from home. It is home, my own thing; so there is hope that I may reach there one day. It is my home, I won’t find satisfaction anywhere else, so, I have to go there – my home. But I am far from the home comfort. That is the difficulty: I have lost it. Any questions on this?

Jnane prayasam udapasya, scholarship is poison. Are you ready to admit this?

What you have gathered that is all nonsense, plodding in the mud. It is all misrepresentation, knowledge of misrepresentation. The bag is not filled with money, but filled with some brick-bats. The brain is filled up with all misleading things. Are you ready to admit this? Not so soon. What do you say?

So much importance we have given. Many of us boast of our knowledge, our experience. But the bhakti-school is putting the hammer on the head of knowledge. Rather, ignorance is better than knowledge? Can you accept that?

Knowledge is more dangerous than ignorance. Because, educated people are comparatively proud; and they are more confident that they are holding a higher position, to remove them from that position is very difficult. Qualitatively in this world, they are in a higher position than the ordinary labourers. So, they are confident that “We are in a superior position.” To remove them, from that proud position is more difficult, than to remove a man, an ordinary labourer, from his ignorance.

It is easy to educate an uneducated person, but to educate an educated person it is more difficult. He has firmly fixed himself there. “This is a superior thing.” He won’t budge an inch from that position easily.

Ordinary persons, misguided souls in the street, their company is a little better; but the company, the influence, of the so-called scholars is more dangerous. That sort of subtle poison, is very difficult to remove. They are proud, “I know I hold a higher position than the ordinary mass.” That sort of ego, that fine ego, is very difficult to remove.

Ordinary persons think, “Yes, we are culprits.” The ordinary religious man thinks, “Yes, I’m a religious man.” It is very difficult to remove him from his so-called religion, so-called faith.

## **The Glory of the Divine Feminine Nature**

**Devotee:** Maharaj, we know the injunctions forbidding sannyasis and

brahmacaris specifically from mixing with ladies, but what should be the general overall vision of the male section of devotees as we are serving Mahaprabhu's mission together with our Godsisters?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** According to the varnasrama system, generally the sudras (laboring class) and ladies are not allowed direct participation in the higher religious functions. Only indirect participation is allowed for them, and they also do not get the sacred thread. Yet a brahmana boy can be found touching the feet of his mother!

The mother will not touch the Deity of Narayana, but her son who is worshipping Narayana is touching her feet and taking her feetdust. Such a position is there in the varnasrama system. Women are generally considered unfit or below the standard of engaging in direct service to the Lord, but in the Vaisnava conception there is no such strictness about that.

In my youth some sort of disregard grew in my mind about the lady section - "I must keep far away from them; they are untouchable." But that notion was amended by my aunt in this way: She noted my nature, my conduct, and once affectionately remarked to me, "Oh, don't you know that ladies represent Laksmidevi? They belong to the same section, and in them the qualities of sacrifice and submission are very clearly visible, so they should be respected. They should be respected, and the aggressive male nature is to be viewed unfavorably. The feminine egoconception is an ideal of a very noble type wherein sacrifice, the devotional aspect, is very prominent. Ladies are not aggressors; they are sacrifice personified. Whereas the male nature - that is aggressive."

Gradually that idea came to me and I learned to appreciate Sita, Draupadi, and so many others, especially the supreme example shown by the Gopis. The standard established by the Gopis has shown that self-forgetfulness, selfsacrifice, and selfsurrendering reaches its zenith, its highest conception, in the ladyaspect. The passive aspect holds the highest position: that viewpoint came gradually and caused a turnabout within my mind.

Madhurarasa, consorhood, is the highest position, and within Srimati Radharani we find the greatest degree of sacrifice and affection. The males are the aggressors; they are responsible for all the difficulties and troubles, not the ladies. That we possess the aggressive nature of a male is the disease in us.

Gradually that perception developed from inside, and ultimately I found that when the female nature is pure and in connection with the Supreme Lila of Vatsalyarasa and madhurarasa, it holds the highest position in the topmost realm. And our aspiration is for engagement in the service of Srimati Radharani.

The position of Sri Radha is that of the highest service to Krsna, and Radhadasyam has been considered by Mahaprabhu to be the highest attainment. Vasudeva Ghosa says:

*(yadi) gaura na haita, tabe ki haita  
kemanee dharitam de'  
radhara mahima premarasasima  
jagade janata ke?*

Who could disclose this holy, divine fact if Sri Gauranga did not personally appear on this Earth? Who could let us know, who could inform us that the highest servitor is Radharani? But Gauranga did come, and He clearly showed that the highest conception of service is to be engaged in the service of that highest, Negative Potency.

## **The Greatness of the Vaisnava**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Every part of a pure Vaisnava- his wrath, his abusing, everything in him- is pure, is good. It cannot but be. Whether his blessing or his curse, through him Krsna is giving something. Nalakuvera and Manigriva were cursed by Rsi Narada to become trees; but that misfortune was managed in such a way that they came to have their birth in Vrindavan, so that when their tree-form would be broken, uprooted by Krsna, they would get the chance to go to Goloka, for their eternal service.

So any connection with a Vaisnava is able to give such an ultimately beneficial result. But that does not mean that we shall deliberately go to offend him! It is

not meant like that and we should not take it in that way. To do so will be inconsistent with the meaning; it will be suicidal.

The Lord Himself says, *aham bhakta-parardhino asvatantra iva dvija*, “I am dependent on My devotees.” This was told by Lord Narayana to Durvasa Muni, in the case of Ambarisa Maharaj. Through affection, the infinitesimal jiva-soul, though by constitution the Lord’s potency, and fully dependent on Him, can conquer or control his Possessor, his Lord.

We find that the law of affection is such. In India, in the family, the mother formally has nothing, she has no property, no right; but she commands reverence and respect, a high respect, and through this, she holds a superior position even to that of the father. The father holds the property; the mother holds no such property, no such right, formal right, but she has ‘social right’, and through it she holds the greatest respect of the children. There is a popular sloka which says that the father is considered ‘higher than the heaven’, and the mother, ‘higher than the land where we stand.’ And it is also said, and we see, that both the mother and the father help to raise the children, but in that the mother’s quota is far greater than that of the father, so her dignity, her superiority, is much greater than his. This is the custom in *varnasrama-dharma*: the mother has no legal possession, but she has social or moral possession.

When Durvasa Muni ran to Lord Narayana for His shelter, being chased by Sudarsana Cakra due to his offense against Ambarisa Maharaj, Lord Narayana told him,

*aham bhakta-parardhino, hy asvatantra iva dvija  
sadhubhir grasta-hrdayo, bhaktir bhakta-jana-priyah*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 9:4:63)

“I am dependent on My devotees. O you brahmin, I am not at all independent of them- I am dependent on them, as if I have no freedom of My own. Yes, freedom I have got; but through My devotees’ affection, I am reduced to such a position that it is as if I have none. In the case of My devotees I cannot but be partial; My independent thinking has no place there, so much indebted I think I am to them. *Sadhubhir grasta-hrdayo*: My whole heart has been ‘swallowed’ by them, those saints, devotees. They have swallowed Me, and I may not have any independent thinking, but only their interest, at heart. By their service, by their serving tendency, they have acquired such a position with Me.”

Such an admission, a wonderful thing! Durvasa Muni wanted impartial judgement from the Lord: “I am a brahmana, Ambarisa is a ksatriya; I am a sannyasi, he is a grhastha, in household life. So my prestige is above him. And You are ‘brahmanya-deva’, You are supposed to be the supporter of the brahmanas. So I have a claim to You, that You must make a fair judgement in this case.” Lord Brahma, and Mahadeva Siva, they had both frustrated Durvasa: “Go to Narayana, we can’t do anything in this matter, we can’t interfere.” Then Durvasa had to approach Narayana for shelter. And Narayana replied: aham bhakta parardhino, “I am helpless; I am dependent on My devotees!”

But Narayana also made a good argument to Durvasa: “Yes, you are a brahmana; but Ambarisa was also observing the Ekadasi-vrata, which is connected with Me. You observed that same vow, it is true, and you also knew, like him, that the parana, the time for breaking the fast, is a part of that vow. Then what wrong did Ambarisa do? What was his fault? Only in order to observe, to give respect to the vow, he did parana, in your absence. And you also did parana, on time; but, you are his guest, so he only took a drop of water to observe the indispensable part of the vow. He only took a drop of water, he did not feed himself without feeding you- and you were enraged with him? What he did, in his observance of the vow, he only did it for Me. And that disturbed you. And you say that you are more akin to Me than Ambarisa? The difference between you two arose where? In observance of My vow you both acted- and he was at fault? What reason is there? Who is nearer to Me, you or he?

You say that you are a brahmana, a sannyasi, that you are all these great things, and that you have the higher position. But when you went to burn him with that jatam, that fire-demon created from the hair you plucked from your head, Ambarisa did not step back, he did not run to save his life. But you- brahmana, sannyasi- when Sudarsana came to attack you, you were running through the whole universe to save your life. Then, who is sannyasi, you or he? When faced with the fire, he did not budge an inch to save his life. He stood, with the attitude: “If I have done anything wrong, let my life be finished.” But you ran everywhere- to Brahma, to Siva, finally you came here, in fear for your life. Then whose renunciation is superior, is better?” In this way Durvasa was given stricture; he was rebuked, chastised, by Lord Narayana.

Then Lord Narayana told Durvasa, “You will have to go back to Ambarisa. I cannot give any judgement against My devotee. He will give judgement in this case. Go to him, and see how generous he is.” What was Durvasa to do? He had

to come before his opponent, for his judgement of the case. Arriving at the place of Ambarisa, he found him still standing in the same spot, mortified: “The brahmana is troubled on my account, and he is my guest. Some accident happened in such a way that Sudarsana chased him, and he is running all around, in every direction. But, he is my guest; without feeding him, how can I take food?” In this way Ambarisa was standing there in a mournful condition: “It is a bad luck for me, that when my guest is waiting I could not feed him, as is proper. How can I take food when my honoured guest is disturbed, and running this way and that? How can I?”

Just as he was thinking this, Durvasa appeared, chased by Sudarsana: “Maharaj, save me! There is no other saviour in this world for me, except you. I have come to you. Please, save me!”

Then Ambarisa began to pacify Sudarsana. He prayed: “If for a single day I have done any devoted activity for Narayana, O Sudarsana, you please pacify yourself. Be pacified. This brahmana is my honourable guest, and that you will disturb him in my presence- I cannot tolerate it. Please, stop.” So Sudarsana had to withdraw, and Durvasa was saved. And then Durvasa was fed, as the guest of Ambarisa. And, astonished by the magnanimity of Ambarisa, Durvasa announced:

*aho ananta-dasanam, mahattvam drstam adya me  
krtagaso ‘pi yad rajan, mangalani samihase*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 9:5:14)

“O King, today I have experienced the greatness of the devotees of God, of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, because in spite of my offense against you, you have prayed for my protection.”

Durvasa was astounded to find the depth of generosity in the servitors of Ananta, Narayana. That great rsi began to speak aloud, to announce on all sides the magnanimity, the nobility of the servitors of Narayana: “How great they are! I did so much wrong towards him, and he saved my life from the reaction, the danger that came as reaction! I insulted him, and he is honouring me so much.”

So for one who has got nothing, who thinks that he is not an independent entity but that he is a slave, fully dependent on the Absolute, for him the Absolute has got, correspondingly, the proper recognition.

Lord Narayana Himself sent Durvasa to Ambarisa, His devotee, to be judged. Brahma failed, Mahadeva failed, and Narayana Himself admitted: “I also failed;

I could not do anything independent of you, My devotee. You are the judge.”  
The Lord makes the highest judge His devotee, His servant. We find it is like this.

## The Guide

**Devotee:** I wanted to enquire as to how to recognise *guru*, *sastra*, and *sadhu*.

**Srila Guru Maharaj:** We receive confirmation from our heart’s approval, our inner approval. We must trace it to there because that took me to my Guru. Guru is all in all, but who took me to my Guru? It was my inner sentiment, my inner guide. It did not like anything else in the environment but instead selected that advice.

Many others do not care to come here, and many may ridicule this life, but what made me come here? I cannot deprecate that internal approval, consciousness and sincerity. Therefore that is an important factor and ultimately we have to depend on that internal consciousness the most. When collecting advice from the Scriptures and when seeking or relying on advice from a *sadhu*, the only thing that takes me there is my internal approval, my inner friend. If it were not for that I would not have come. Indeed, so many others do not come. So who has taken me to this plane?

*na hi kalyana-krt kascid, durgatim tata gacchati*  
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 6.40)

One who sincerely wants real good can never be deceived. When one is a real seeker of the truth, he can never be deceived. Krsna says: “My dear boy, one who is sincerely hankering after the truth can never come across misfortune. If apparently some misfortune comes to visit him along the way, that is to enhance his position for his improvement.”

Some sort of danger may come on our way but if we are sincere it will be as a

test to us and when we will overcome that, it will be an addition to our glory. The temptations will be rejected and disarmed – but they will plead for us again. So sincerity – sincere hankering after the truth – is needed if we are to go further. And that is made of sukṛti – the grace of the divine agents who, by their nature, are wandering through this cursed land to help others who may not even know they are being helped.

**Devotee:** What are *śravaṇa-dāśa* and *varāṇa-dāśa*?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Śravaṇa-dāśa* is when one is satisfied by first hearing the philosophy, teachings, etc., during probationary life. When one is satisfied with *śravaṇa* he then comes to accept a guide, a guru – and that is the stage of *varāṇa-dāśa*. He has the mood, “Now I am prepared to take formal admission in this line, and accept you as my leader. Now whatever you say, I must obey.” That is *varāṇa-dāśa*.

At first there is acceptance of a clan such as Christianity, Mohammedanism, etc., to which someone has been introduced. After first accepting a creed, a person will be selected who will be able to satisfy me according to the principles of that creed. He will be able to give me the desired end of life. He is Guru. First the creed is accepted, then the guide.

Then beyond *varāṇa-dāśa* begins *sādhana-dāśa*. *Sādhana-dāśa* is the third stage, and it means to follow the practices under the guidance of our guru. By following that we shall gain some realisations and attain a tangible position: “Yes, I feel that what was in the words and propaganda is now in my heart. My heart feels its touch.” And that stage is called *prapāṇa-dāśa*. Only after being thus established is one able to also distribute such things to others, and that stage is called *apāṇa-dāśa*. Without being established in *prapāṇa-dāśa*, only with the help of someone who is established there can we go to preach.

**Devotee:** Are there five stages?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Śravaṇa*, *varāṇa*, and *sādhana* are within this camp. Then comes *prapāṇa* – the tangible feeling, the position of oneself experiencing the thing – attainment. First we come in touch with that reality, then we become established in that real plane, and then we shall be able to distribute it to others – *apāṇa*.

**Devotee:** When we have inner conviction, are we then safe? Also, does the

external Guru help us to contact the Chaitya-guru, the internal Guru?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The external Guru – Mahanta-guru – not only helps us to contact the Chaitya-guru, but he helps to prepare us so we can infallibly read the direction of the Chaitya-guru. At first in a raw way we may receive direction from the Chaitya-guru, and that draws us to the Mahanta-guru. With the help of the Chaitya-guru we come to the Mahanta-guru. The Chaitya-guru helps us in a raw way, in a general way which is not very systematic and clear.

Coming to Mahanta-guru we feel, “Yes, with the help of my Chaitya-guru my internal hankering has been satisfied.” Then with the help of our Mahanta-guru we come to find that clear direction in our Chaitya-guru. They are helping one another. By the help of the Mahanta-guru our ability to read the Chaitya-guru becomes more clear, more skilfully developed. Our reading of the innate Chaitya-guru becomes more clear as we become cleansed of the different thoughts and ideas mixed up from yogis, jnanis, karmis and so many other different sections. The Chaitya-guru will give us more adherence to the Mahanta-guru, and in this way they each help the other.

After receiving help from the Chaitya-guru we come to Mahanta-guru, but sometimes it may also happen that after accepting *Mahanta-guru*, the Chaitya-guru again becomes covered. The Mahanta-guru will then take the disciple and help him cleanse the dirt that has covered his Chaitya-guru. The Chaitya-guru may become buried by some anartha, or some *Vaisnava-aparada* but The Mahanta-guru will come to give relief.

Sometimes many may join the Mission and then go away. But the Guru does not allow them to easily leave. He tries his best to bring them back again and to a firm understanding: “Why have you gone away in order to search for other things?”

“The desire for money and the attraction of free mixing with the ladies disturbed me and drew me away.”

If the Mahanta-guru is genuine he will say that these particular desires should be removed. They are not the real objectives. For the good of the disciple he will explain the temporary nature of any connection with such things and how minor they are, and again try to reinstate him.

Some dirt may enter someone, but by the grace of the Gurus the dirt will be cleansed in no time and he will return to the real path.

“Don’t disturb yourself with these little, tiny, filthy things. Don’t go away in this way.” Many immature and unfit persons may join the Mission, so it is not impossible that some sort of anarthas may come again to attack. It is like a fight. Sometimes one party gains ground, and sometimes that same party is losing. And ultimately the real party will win the battle. It is a battle. In everyone’s heart there will be a battle because we are sadhakas not siddhas – we are not fully realised souls, but we are following the process to realisation. Sometimes the devotees may feel defeated, and sometimes may even go mad. But on the whole they shall have to make progress. Therefore some sort of consideration and generosity should be allowed.

We should think that we are in a hospital where there are so many diseased persons. This is not a place where all the healthy people live – it is not possible. We are also patients and there are so many other patients. Patients are of different types: some may even die, and some may have a relapse. But ignoring all these facts, with real interest for my own health I must go on with the help of a doctor. Taking his help by following the proper prescribed medicine and diet, I will be cured. Just because so many others are getting worse or dying, does not mean that my own health must also deteriorate.

Another example is that in a school, all may not pass the examinations. Many will fail, but still a determined student must go on. We should not be discouraged from following the path of our eternal benefit just because of some unsuccessful candidates. I should not be cowed down by seeing this. I must be wakeful to the fact that this is my vital and only interest. I cannot just leave and go away.

Everyone may go, but I must fight single-handed with the enemy. All may fly away, but, because this is my vital interest, I will stay and fight single-handed with self-determination. Why? “Because I have already understood and realised this to be my vital interest., so I cannot go back.” If even once we find this to be deeply rooted within our heart, such determined resolve must come from within. We will find this to be the very thing we were searching after.

**Devotee:** Can a patient also become a doctor?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes. When he is fully cured, has studied about medicine, and has undergone the necessary education of a doctor, he may become a doctor. It is necessary to be qualified and also appointed. You see, first of all it is necessary to be qualified, then by the appointment of the higher administration you can become a doctor in the hospital.

You may engage in private practice if you are qualified, but to become a doctor in a hospital you must have some sanction from above. In this way a sadhu can give assistance in several ways, but the Acharyya, holding a big position, should have sanction from above. And that is *prapana-dasa*.

**Devotee:** Who will decide whether the patient is qualified to be a doctor?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** External sanction is not necessary by letter, but he is to be already awake and fixed in the internal world. Inspiration will come from the internal world: “The people are suffering, and you have the medicine. You should distribute the medicine to the patients.” This may be seen in a dream, but while awake also, internal inspiration will come to you, and, because you know the medicine and you know the symptoms of the disease, irresistibly you will advance to help the patients. You have the medicine and you cannot but engage yourself in treating them. You will see this more clearly than daylight, more really than this word of experience.

People are suffering but you have the medicine. You used that medicine and you were cured. Now you find another to be suffering from the same disease. You have the cure in your hand, so why should you not apply it? What explanation do you have not to do so?

It will not be for making money that you will give the medicine, not for fame, but it will be due to the internal urge to help them. And you will find that the noble predecessors have also asked you to do so:

*yare dekha, tare kaha ‘krsna’-upadesa  
amara ajnaya guru hana tara’ei desa*  
(Sri Chaitanya-charitamrta, Madhya 7.128)

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu instructed, “Whoever you meet, try to rescue them by talking to them about Krsna.” If there is a ditch and you see a man about to blindly fall into it, will you not try to save him? It is a natural feeling. When it is plain, so very plain that it will happen, but you don’t help him, then you will be responsible. This common sense may be applied. But we must be sincere.

The danger is that we must not be motivated by money, fame, or any worldly gain. Kanak, kamini, and pratistha are the three main disturbing elements that misguide us and draw us from this side to that. But when we are free from them, the street we walk shall be broad and clear.

God is good, and you will like to see everyone becoming good by getting God. God is good and God is great. When that superior type of thinking will be clear to you, all your activities will be controlled only by that one principle of life. And with that you will go on helping others with the firm faith that this must be given to all: “This is very tasteful. Please come to a safe position away from the danger-zone, and you will become happy.” The tasteful medicine will make people happy, and if that is actually in your possession you cannot but feel the urge within to help others.

With real knowledge all the general questions such as where we are to go, how to go, and why we should go, are to be solved in order to help others.

*‘ke ami,’ ‘kene amaya jare tapa-traya’*  
(Sri Chaitanya-charitamrta, Madhya 20.102)

Who am I? Why am I troubled? And how can I achieve my desired end? These fundamental problems should be solved, and if you have the solution you must give it to others. “My friends, come and solve your problems!” That will be the mentality of a preacher – and found very intensely in an Acharya.

**Devotee:** Someone may have a sincere urge, but he may not be completely aware of the danger, and he himself may become infected.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The proper path follows a fine strategy: with the help of a higher agent he may approach, otherwise not. Without the help of a higher agent he will be nowhere, he’ll be lost. When he goes to cure a patient, if he will not be able to cure him, then the patient’s germ will attack him and he will also die with the patient. In that case he won’t be of any help and he should not approach. He should inform the higher doctor and ask for better medicine to help his serious patient. In the case of doubt that, “With my meagre medicine and meagre instruments I may not be able to cure this patient,” one should not venture to approach the patient, but instead he will appeal to the doctor of a higher position. This is very reasonable.

Following Mahaprabhu’s advice to help others, still it may be found in rare cases that the doctor approaches with a good heart to cure the patient, but himself dies. It is also not impossible, but not desirable.

When one organised party approaches for relief-work, some soldiers may be sacrificed before obtaining victory. The victorious party will also have to incur some loss when fighting with the enemy. Similarly, in the Mission some soldiers

may be asked to approach the rich men, and the women, therefore sometimes some may be lost. But their loss will be for the time being, and again they will come back. We expect them to come back again because once someone has a taste, he will not be able to forget that.

*nehabhikrama-naso 'sti, pratyavayo na vidyate  
svalpam apy asya dharmasya, trayate mahato bhayat*  
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita, 2.40)

Whatever has been acquired is eternal – it cannot be destroyed.

*kaunteya pratijanihi, na me bhaktah pranasyati*  
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita, 9.31)

The assurance is given by Krsna: “Even if he has come to Me only for the time being, he has taken some medicine before leaving, so he ultimately must come to Me again.”

## **The Importance of Sadhu Sanga**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** *Sadhu sanga krsna nama.* The holy name must be taken with the attitude of service to the saints. Serving means die to live; to throw oneself wholesale for the higher existence. Mr. Gandhi risked his whole life at every point of action. His attitude was, “Whatever I told to others, I am to maintain that throughout the whole of my life.” What am I taking the name for? To have some fame as a sadhu? No! That should not be our objective. *Kanak, kamini, partistha* – not for money, not to attract women, and never to attract popularity.

Rather I should be ready to sacrifice myself fully for whom I am serving, for whom I am taking the name. It is not a limited thing, but complete surrender, then the whole thing is guaranteed. My pursuit, my attempt should be backed by my whole energy, whole prospect and everything. This is the attitude I should

have to search for a drop of Vaikuntha nectar. Otherwise our effort will be useless.

Die to live means sacrifice or seva. Seva means death. Seva means to give one's own self for a particular cause, for Krsna. That this mad, mundane concocted self should be saved is not a very laudable thing. It is a mortal thing, and the depot of many reactions. So one should get rid of this centre as soon as possible, and enter into the land of confidence, goodness, fairness and sweetness. Try to enter that land with a sincere and wholesome attitude. Your campaign must be wholesome not partial. Taking one step forward and three steps back won't do. There should be no such hesitation. You are finite and you want to get the advantage of the infinite? You are so small, and do you think that by sacrificing only a part of your smallness your aspiration for the whole can be fulfilled? Is it reasonable to expect such? No, it is not so easy.

Atah sri krsna namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyaih, if only our superficial senses are engaged in Krsna cultivation, as if it is nothing, then you cannot produce the name, but only mundane sound. Sevon mukhe hi jivadhau svayam eva sphuraty adah. Your tongue can produce mundane sound, but that is not Krsna. For the name to be Krsna, Krsna has to come down. Don't be self-deceptive, thinking that, "Taking the name, I am a great sadhu." It is not like that. Krsna has come down to you in the form of sound and He is spiritual, transcendental. So seva mukhe or your complete surrender to Him will attract Him, and He graciously descend to save you by His name. In your archan, in performing your duties, at every step He will come when you are giving yourself to Him, then He will accept you. He will come and embrace you. He'll be within you and without you, everywhere. But only those whose eyes are clear, and are not captured by any prejudice from selfish end or ordinary things can see Him. Those who are not captivated by any prejudice, in whom all prejudice is cleared can directly see the highest power or highest principle, underlying all.

Our own tendency for exploitation and renunciation creates so many units of this plane, like so much dust to blind our eyes so we can't see Him. Kanaka pasyanti kamini mayayo jagat. Those who are lustful try to find out where is a beautiful lady, pasyanti dhana mayo jagat, the greedy people always busy their minds with the thought, "Oh, there is Birla, there is Tata, there is Ford," who are the moneyed men in this world. They only think about moneyed men because they love wealth the most. Dhara mayo jagat and khira prayanti narayano jagat, those who are liberated from the outer external influences may find, "Oh, I am in the

kingdom of Narayan, who is the support and guardian of the whole world. We see His hand everywhere. Without His direction nothing can move.” They may boast that, “I have got such power, I have got such beauty, I have got wealth,” but it is all a false show. The real backing spirit is Narayan, the all pervading, all knowing, all good principle. And the temporary external plane is the killing aspect of existence. It is only our prejudices of so many types that have captured us.

So by whatever process we approach the Lord the tenor of our movement should be, if we want a guarantee that it will actually be for the satisfaction of Krsna, that my whole effort depends upon the genuine character of the agent through whom I am rendering my services. If the agent is a false man then my whole energy is wasted. But if he is a real agent then I must be the gainer through him. If I connect with Vaikuntha through him then my actions will be valued. Otherwise we may be the loser, aparadha (offender). Nama aparadha, seva aparadha, arcana aparadha – there are so many aparadhas. It is also written in the scriptures that if service is not done properly, then we are sure to commit some offenses against the Deity. Either we will get satisfaction or trouble. Aradhana is the proper thing, and the hateful handling of the holy things is aparadha. It all depends on the satisfaction of whom it is we are serving. So we must be careful.

We must not be overconfident of our previous acquisition – so much I have acquired, my progress is so much. I must not be satisfied with my self-certificate, self-satisfaction, the certificate of my own making. Mahaprabhu Himself said, “I am taking the name, I am showing so many tears in the name of Krsna. But why? It is all a false show na prema gandho ‘sti. My crying is only a show to canvas others to see what a great devotee I am.” So much you are to disbelieve your own self that you are a devotee. In this way we must be very careful, very, very careful.

Kotis vapi maha mune, Krsna das Kaviraj Goswami and Narottam Das Thakur were seeing, “The whole world is absolved from sin, but I am neglected, I am left as the only exception. I am so low and ill fated that I am rejected from that most benevolent infinite lila. I alone am rejected. I could not utilize this great fortunate wave.” This should be the real tendency of a genuine vaisnava who has actually come in relation with the infinite. Whenever the finite comes in touch with the infinite his temperament cannot be otherwise. “I am empty, I don’t get anything,” that should be the temperament. I feel emptiness within me. I can’t get the goal. My life is frustrated. Neither do I get a drop of grace from the Lord,

and the world, of course, I have left. So both sides gone.

I have no alternative, O Lord. If you don't accept me then I am undone. Please, just make me the servant of the servant of the servant. Give the remotest connection to me. Graciously give the most distant connection of Yourself to me. Don't leave me, my Lord. I can't tolerate the craving for you. This heart-felt, heart rending prayer must come to the vaisnava devotee of the Lord. Onlookers will find that he has got a peep of the fortune. The charm for the world outside is fully eliminated for that person, from the core of his heart. And in the near future his heart will be filled with the nectar of the grace of Krsna.

*Bhukti, mukti sprha yavat pisci na nivartate.* The desire for enjoyment, and also for renunciation or mukti, no engagement, are compared to two ghosts (pisaci). So how do you dare to express that bhakti, real love for Krsna, will descent in your heart? Those two demons are there, and do you think the noble lady of devotion will come and sit on the same bench with those demons? How can you expect that? Have you freed yourself from all those nasty things that you dare to invite the lady of Krsna bhakti to come?

Krsna bhajan is independent of any external form of life. Mahaprabhu says “*naham vipro na ca narapati na vaisya na sudra, gopi bhartu pada kamalayor dasa dasanu dasa.*” Varnasrama dharma is just the beginning, then gradually improving we are to go up to the absolute service of Krsna. Without consideration of any law or form, thinking only of service, whatever we do or think or speak, everything should be done for the service of Krsna. That is the standard of real devotion. And mere form may be a little favourable, but not always.

The spirit, even crossing every formality, is what is required of us. Our absolute attraction for the service, the beauty does not allow law to have any status. In the beginning they have got some sort of utility. But when a little advanced they do not care for anything. Only sadhu sanga, adherence to the saint of similar type and a little better. Those who are on the path of raga bhajana, divine love and attraction, find that the only way, the only thing which can guide us is spontaneous desire, laulyam atram mulyam ekalam. The only price is earnest desire and nothing else. Krsna bhakti rasa-bavita mati, murti kriyatam yadi kuto 'pi labhyate. Ramananda Raya says to Mahaprabhu, “Anywhere you find it, try to purchase it at any price.” The pure inclination towards the service of Krsna, the innermost tendency to want Krsna, to get Him, the earnest desire to have

Him – a drop of that desire for the divine attraction, anywhere you find it, one must try to purchase it at any price. You may acquire it anywhere. It may be from a brahmana or from anyone. It does not matter about the form.

Kiba vipra kiba nyasi sudra keno haya, yei krsna tattva vetti sei guru haya. Wherever there is a drop of that divine love, try to get it. And what is the price? Earnest desire for it. No other price but earnest desire, laulyam. It is not to be purchased by any money, or anything else which is acquired by so many formal practices in cores of births. Substance is necessary and not form. Form may be adopted only as much as it may connect me with that higher thing. So, sarva dharman parityaja, ‘all phases of duty you perceive as perfect, give up. At once try to jump in Me, into the ocean of nectar. I am the ocean of nectar. Try to jump.’ That is the direct teaching. So our addiction to this or that, to vanaprastha, sannyasa, or grhastha has got very negligent value. But the earnest desire, that is to be acquired by any means. That is bhakti proper.

Others try to know about Krsna from the scriptures (sastra). Ramakrishna once remarked that in the almanac it is written that this year so much rain is expected. But it does not mean that if we please the almanac a drop of water will ooze out of it. So the sastra is something like that. The sastras say do this and do that. But that does not mean the sastra will give us the result too. They give direction, and as much as we practice we get.

So, helplessly, when one is searching by this method or that method, when he practically comes in contact with the service for a vaisnava he gets real benefit. Then the service of vigraha and sastra all becomes superficial. The more real thing we find in the vaisnava. In his heart, the Krsna conception, Krsna as He is, knowledge or love, whatever we may be searching for, we will find in a living condition in the heart of a vaisnava who is regulating all his activities towards the service of the Lord. In the vaisnava it is animated more than in the *vigraha*, than in the *tirtha* and than in the *sastra*.

Direct connection with Krsna we can find in the consciousness of a vaisnava. From what plane is he regulating all his activities? To what plane is he withdrawing himself from all worldly attraction? What is that which guides him towards some direction which is unknown and unknowable? He is moving towards that direction which is not to be traced in any loss or gain of this world. What is that thing? Nanam tisthami vaikuntha yoginam hrdayesu va mad bhakta yatra guyante tatra tisthami narado. “I am not even in Vaikuntha, not even in the

heart of the yogis, but where my devotees are singing with pleasure about Me, I am there, I am owned by them.” *Mac citta mad gata prana, bodha-yantah parasparam kathayantas ca mam nityam tusyanti ca ramanti ca.*

In the Ramanuja sampradaya there is an incident regarding three Alwar devotees, nitya parsada devotees, who were contemporaries. One night they went to a temple perhaps for some occasion. They did not know one another. In the darkness one was talking, another hearing. It was also very sweet to him. Then the third also joined. They were talking although they did not know one another. They might have heard the names of each other, but this night they have met together. Natha yogi, Bhuta yogi and someone talking between them. Then one questioned, “We three are here. Do you feel the presence of a fourth one?” One told, “Yes, I feel the presence of a fourth one”. By this it is meant that the Lord, about whom they were talking, is present. In their talking, in the conversation, He has come and is hearing the talk. So, only attraction, pure spiritual attraction, and nothing else can be pleasing to one but Krsna, Radharani, the gopis, all this, the very innermost part of the heart is taken possession of by the thought of Krsna and His associates, His lila, His name, and His paraphernalia. That is what is necessary.

*man mana bhava mad bhakta mad yaji mam namaskuru*

Krsna says, “You Arjuna, you are My most favourite devotee. I promise you at least, I won’t deceive you. So I say that I am everything. I tell you clearly that at least I won’t deceive you because you are My friend. Always mind Me, become My devotee and serve Me. If you sacrifice anything, do it for Me. Or at least you may show respect to Me. So you are sure to enter Me, to come to Me. Myself alone you will come to. This is the truth. I promise you. You are My favourite. The truth is this, do everything for Me, attend Me, always think of Me and you are sure to come to Me.” The thinking, the engagement, the very life of engagement is attraction for Him. Attraction for Him, but how to get it? How to seek shelter from the devotees? Superficially we can get something from the sastra, but substantially from the devotee.

The influence you catch from the devotee, what they hold within their heart, within their endeavour, pervading through all their activities, that particular attraction is the divine thing that I want. That most subtle of the subtle, the nerve structure within, that can move the bodily activities, that can help the body to do its functions is what we are after. That inner energy of the devotee, that makes

him do what we do not find in the world, with no attraction for sense pleasure, fame, name, money, etc. but for something else, for Krsna. We must follow their path. “Who comes to serve Me directly are not My real devotees. But who is the devotee of My devotee, they are My real devotees. If you love Me, love My dog. His love for Me is so intense that wherever he finds any external connection with Me he engages himself fully there.”

Vaisnava seva, guru seva, vigraha seva and nama seva are all recommended, but in Kali yuga especially, the service of the name has been given as the most general approach. It is mentioned sadhu sanga Krsna nama ei matta jai. We must climb up to the real plane where we can take the name proper, vaikuntha nama grahanam asesagham haram vidun. It is true that an infinite magnitude of sin may be removed by one name, but that must be vaikuntha nama. It must have the characteristic of vaikuntha, the unlimited plane of eternity, not only the physical sound. So sadhu sanga is necessary. The name must be taken from gurudeva, and with the company of sadhu the name must be taken.

Nama sankirtana means to preach the name, what the name is, and the ten offenses against the name. There are also four abhasa or shadowy expressions of the name. They should also be eliminated and the real name which is one and the same with the Lord should be taken. The greatness and magnanimity of the name is so charming, the name is the Lord Himself. In this way, by taking the name, nam bhajan or kirtan, we can be saved from the external contamination of the forces of the world of karma and jnana, exploitation and renunciation.

These are the two great enemies of devotion, bhukti mukti sprha. The tendency to exploit and its opposite, the tendency to renounce, neither the negative nor the renunciation of the negative can be a real positive. A third thing is necessary and that is constructive, full in itself and perfect. Positive is not mere withdrawal from the negative side. The positive has got its own characteristics, so we must come in connection with the positive: sat cit ananda, satyam sivam, sundaram. We must connect ourselves in all phases, whatever is possible for us.

Grha va vante thake ha gauranga bole dake. It doesn't matter much whether one is a householder or a sannyasi. How much he has intensely engaged himself in the service of the Lord, that is to be seen. A grhasta may even be above a sannyasi. During the time of Mahaprabhu, so many grhasta devotees were there, but the real spirit is all Gauranga. We found in our young days when we joined the non-cooperative movement of Gandhi that there were so many volunteers

who had left everything. But when the police were coming they were fleeing for fear of their life. Still we found that a grhasta like Chittaranjan Das and others, with all their family members, were giving resistance to the police attack. Although a grhasta, he sends his son to the prison and his daughter and wife to police custody. Gandhi remarked, "I envy your situation." As a grhasta he was living like a fully attached man. But in the real work of supporting the cause, he is not less than one who has left everything and dedicated himself wholly. As a family man he is not afraid, whereas others may be afraid. So service is necessary. In whatever position he may be it does not matter much. When the necessity will come, even an apparently worldly minded householder may sacrifice the whole for Krsna.

In the case of Haris Chandra, for example, he was a king for the truth as he could conceive of it. He left everything for the cause which he loved. So wholesale dedication, the internal hankering, the fire within is the real necessity. It may not be found in a sannyasi, but in a grhasta, vanaprastha, brahmachari or anyone. We want the substance and not the form so much. The burning fire of separation from Krsna is the real wealth. Just as with Sri Chaitanyadeva, His separation from Krsna is so intense, that he can't sleep or take food. His separation is so intense that at night He is trying to get out of the house, though it is all closed. So he jumped the walls of the house, practically unconsciously, and fell in front of the Jagannath temple and fainted. What degree of separation is found in Him! It is not possible for us to conceive the degree of feeling that there was. Sometimes he was rubbing his face against the walls because he could not get out and go to His Lord.

A sakhi is representing to Krsna the pain of separation which Radharani feels for Him. Previously, she explains, a continuous flow of tears was found in Her eyes, but it is not there anymore. Somehow She has managed to distribute them to Her friends. Now they are weeping like anything, but no trace of tears can be found in Her. She had some temperature in Her body, but now that is also gone. That She has transferred to Her intimate sakhis. Her attendants are now saying many things. Undesirable talks of mourning are found among Her attendants. Previously all those things were found in Srimati Radharani, but somehow She managed to leave them all with Her friends. She had also been absorbed in deep thought. What will be Her fate? Maybe Krsna will never come again. He is doing this and that. So many thoughts were within Her, but now we find no trace.

But Her superiors are burdened with those deep thoughts. “O, the girl won’t live. She will pass away very soon. What will be the fate of Braja? If She passes away Krsna won’t come here again”. What little is left in Her we see in the form of hard breathing and beating heart. In a day or two that will also disappear. Now, Krsna, You may remain happy here for your misdeed. Your misdeed is the cause of all these things, but She has managed to relieve you. No complaint will come against you any more. Silently She is passing away keeping You safe while You remain here and enjoy with Your own friends.

Prahlada was requested by his father, “Please tell me what progress you are making in your gurukula study. What have you learned to be the best thing in life?” Prahlada answered sravanam kirtanam visnu smaranam pada sevanam archanam vandanam dasyam sakhyam atma-nivedanam. Iti pumsarpitam visnu bhaktis avalkanam. “I think the best study is this: to hear, chant, and serve – all in relation to Visnu. That is the best utility of time for everyone in the world. Tat sadhu manye sura varya dehinam. This is what I consider to be the best thing I have learned”. Prahlada’s trouble began from here. His father replied, “Visnu is my enemy eternally, and who has taught you that to cultivate love for Him in different ways is the best understanding of human life?” The torture began. We must also be prepared for that torture. Torture will increase our enthusiasm in an indirect way. Anything may come, anything may go on. Wherever that impetus, that intense tendency to serve Krsna is to be found, there we must go. But it is nowhere, it is unknown und unknowable, and in this way transcendental.

For Aurobindo it was the supramental plane. In fact he was constructing the figure of Siva, Mahadeva, who belongs to that plane. But instead we see that he has wrongly constructed the figure of something other than Mahadeva. Again, when Bhaktivinod Thakur said that India is the best place in the world, and within India, Bengal is the best; then in Bengal, Nabadwip Dham is the best, the highest of all; Aurobindo imitated him saying that India is the best in the world, and Bengal is, of course, the best in India, and the Hooghly district is the best in Bengal. Then I thought, why has he selected Hooghly eliminating Nabadwip? The recollection then came to me that it was the birth place of Raja Ram Mohan Raya, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj. It was my conclusion that it was only for that reason he had selected Hooghly to be the best.

Chitaranjan Das may be as good as Raja Ram Mohan Raya and Rabindranath Tagore, and although his father was a Brahmo, he himself returned to Hinduism telling his friends, “If you write something about me, then please describe me as

a servant of a vaisnava”. That was his temperament. He was a good and sincere man, but not a vaisnava of the ghosha, or pure type, but only the ordinary type who had respect for the vaisnavas. Vipin Pala, who was a revolutionary, extremist and the first in violence, could not accommodate the Gandhi movement, but he was closely connected with C.R. Das. Vipin Pala was in fact engaged as the editor of the magazine published by C.R. Das called “Narayan Patrika”. When, as a college student, we read the “Narayan Patrika” we found Vipin Pala’s explanation of Bhagavad-gita, etc. and a lecture he gave in the Viraha meeting at University Hall, Calcutta.

In that lecture he mentioned that “Sri Krsna Samhita” written by Bhaktivinod Thakur had taken his faith back to vaisnavism, although he had been a pure Brahmo type when he first read the book. We appreciate that he has acknowledged Bhaktivinod Thakur’s writing to such an extent. Bhaktivinod Thakur’s conception was very scientific, as well as deep, simple and fervent. It was accurate and modernized as well. We find many excellent qualities in the writings of Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur.

The high type of realized conception Bhaktivinod Thakur has given us should not be conceived as having been acquired by him in his present life, though it may seem to come from the ordinary events of his life. Rather we should assume that this is the natural growth of the jnana sunya bhakta. It is because of fashion that Bhaktivinod Thakur had some other tendency in his married life and all these other things. They should not stand in the way of the fact that he was an eternal associate, servitor of the Lord. Otherwise, such intensity, such depths of feeling cannot come abruptly. So, Bhaktisiddhanta Prabhupada has seen him as a facsimile of Gadadhara Pandit, and Gaura Kisor Das Babaji as Swarup Damodar. Sometimes he saw Bhaktivinod Thakur as Radharani because his vision was so graphic, spacious, and all comprehensive, filled with deep knowledge and experience. It is impossible unless we consider him to be at least saktyavesa, that is, inspired by the Lord Himself.

Bilvamangal Thakur says *anartha bandhu karanaik sindhu*. “How can I pass these barren days, my Lord? These unfortunate days are impossible for me to pass. Without having a peep of your sight, I cannot stand to live any more. But you are a friend to the helpless, and you are an ocean of kindness and grace. Please consider it my Lord, how can I pass my days without You.” The normal temperament of a devotee will be like that. Separation, of course, will be encouraging. If we find a person is always feeling separation from the Lord that

will be appreciated, whereas anything else should be considered abnormal and dangerous.

Sometimes there may be some confusion about the relative and absolute consideration. The absolute consideration is our own internal Krsna consciousness, and the relative refers to the environment. One must not be influenced by the environment of the mundane world. But that does not mean he won't seek an environment of the spiritual realm. That is found through sadhu sanga. In the spiritual plane the environment contributes much. Even Radharani says that Krsna alone cannot satisfy Her without the environment, so She doesn't want Krsna as such. For instance, in Kuruksetra when She met Krsna, She wanted to take Him back to Vrndavan where Their meeting could be more intimate.

The devotee also says, "Only Krsna, that is nothing to me if we do not find Radharani at His side". So, the environment has a great contribution to make in that realm. Everything there, every minute particle of the environment will help promote my attention towards Krsna. That will be very desirable. But here in the mundane plane, just the opposite is found, the perverted reflection. Everything comes to take me away from Krsna in this plane, and there everything pushes me towards Him. So there in the plane of dedication everything will be healthy. But in the plane of exploitation and renunciation everything is just the opposite, taking me away from the centre, asat sanga.

Sadhu sanga means promoting towards my cause. The mundane plane is the perverted reflection, but just above that it is the real plane which is just the opposite of this. So we must not be maladjusted. Asat sanga tvag ei vaisnava achar. The practices of a student of vaisnavism is only one – to renounce the environment; but that does not mean that the sadhu is eliminated also if he is found. Stri sanga eka sadhu krsna bhakta ara. There are two types of asat. One is stri sangi or yosit sangi, those who are attached to sensual pleasures. And the other is Krsna abhakta, one who has no attraction for Krsna but is engaged in other errands, bhukti kami siddhi kami, who have other desires such as for liberation or material perfection. They should be eliminated. We should be careful, cautious about these two. One may be a scholar, a yogi, a tyagi and all these things, but if he is not a devotee of Krsna he should be eliminated.

Anyabhilasa karma jnana. Those who have the desire to reach for something, for fruitive activity, to plan for some result, and those who are busy to know Krsna

to measure Him, and finish Him by their analysis, these are to be eliminated. Jnana means to always want to measure Krsna or the environment. Jnana means to know, to be master, and to be acquainted with everything. That is jnana, the false errand that I shall be the subject and everything else should be the object of my knowledge. Such wild goose chasing is impossible. It is running after a phantasmagoria, in the words of our Guru Maharaj. Another expression is will-o-the-wisp. It is impossible to know everything and be master of everything. Tvam aham veda sarvani na tvam vetta parantapa. It is not your business to know everything by your constitutional position. It will be folly to bring everything within your consciousness. Jnane prayasam utapasya. Here uta apa asya, where asya means throwing hatefully, and uta means far away. These two adjectives are given for dismissal of knowledge. Only through faith, with the nature of submission can the truth be known.

Mahaprabhu has taught *trnad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna amanina mana dena*. It is very difficult to conquer one's fame, or prestige. *Pratistha*, one's love for position is very difficult to give up. It is easier to give up attraction for females or money, but hankering for one's own position is most difficult. Prestige for position is our innermost enemy. So long as that remains we cannot offer ourselves in the service of a vaisnava. I may accept somewhat hesitatingly the service of God, but to serve a vaisnava would be like coming to a lower settlement. In fact, to become the servant of a vaisnava would actually be the all and end all of my life. But how can I accept that idea? I may accept service under the Supreme Lord, that I may anyhow manage. But to become the servant of the servant of the servant – what is this? What is the fun? Should a man stoop so low as this? Therefore, *pratistha*, position, the consciousness of prestige, is the greatest enemy of the conditioned soul.

Radha dasyam means to become a slave, to embrace the ideal, the hope of becoming a slave. To classify oneself as the slave of Krsna is not the end. One must be willing to become the slave of the slave of the slave. "This is the most ludicrous thing. Let them accept this mean settlement; I won't. So 'ham. I am the biggest of the big. So 'ham, Shivo 'ham. I am the master of maya, Siva. Sivo 'ham." This is the point where the false, separate existence from God begins.

Transcending mortality one comes to the plane of mangal, auspiciousness, which is good in comparison with the plane of mortality. The first reach beyond the limit of mortality or *mrtyaloka*, is Mahadeva, Siva. But from Siva we have to pass to *sundaram*, the land of beauty. Siva is only the middle position or

mangalam. But this mangalam is not differentiated in its fullest characteristics at this point, only it is out of danger. To be out of danger is nothing positive, but it is the highest safe position. However, one must not only be safe, but engaged in the most desirable thing. The safe position is relative Siva. Above that is Sada Siva and the plane of positive engagement.

Once there was one god brother named Kumar Surendra Narayan Raya, an M.A. graduate of Punjab University. He was a rich man whose annual income was three lakhs. He took Hari Nam from our Guru Maharaj. That gentleman went with him to Celon on one occasion. When Guru Maharaj was passing in a car, Surendranath Narayan Raya, who was out for a walk, met him on the wayside and immediately fell flat in the road offering his obeisances in the mud, since at that time it was the rainy season. Then Prabhupad asked, "What are you doing down in the mud? What are you doing? He has got a rich dress but it is all smeared with mud". Then Surendranath said, "We have only one thing to do in life – to make prostration to the Vaisnava. We can't do anything else. Should I be a miser only there? Pranam is our only wealth, everything. If I be a miser there then what will be my fate? Pranam, pramananta eva, that is our only aspiration."

Mahaprabhu once had a talk with one Mathura brahman, Raghupati Upadhyaya, on His way back from Mathura, perhaps in Allahabad. In their talk we find one sloka mentioned. What is the highest conception of figure? The answer was Syamasundar. Syama eva param rupam. What is the highest place of worship? Mathura mandal is the highest place to worship Him. What should be the best age befitting for our service? Kaisora, or new youth. And in what sort of rasa should we try to serve Him? We should try to serve in the mood of madhurya rasa. Mahaprabhu told him that "you have taught Me a good lesson." We want to worship Kaisora Krsna, we are not going to worship old Krsna. There is Mathura and Dwaraka, but we are fond of worshipping Krsna in Vrndavan, where He has a new, youthful life. His companions are also new youths. The highest point is beauty. The idea of eternity is like that, navayauvana, new, youthful, progressing not full blown, but blossoming.

We should not be afraid of our youth, we should adore it. Not that youth will be engaged in pleasure seeking, but in supplying pleasure to the Lord. Utilization, not renunciation is our end. Utilization is the highest good. We want to have our energy in its fullest command. All are youthful in Vrndavan, but well planned, managed, well aimed, and well idealized. Why should we worship anything that is fading or dying? We are worshippers of the full energy to the extreme, but it is

absolute good. Our Guru Maharaj said that there is a proverb: when there is fire in the shed, the cow or bull come out because of fear of fire, seeing the red colour there. And when the cow sees the red colour in the sky he again becomes afraid thinking that there is fire and it will come to attack me and burn me.

In the same way the mayavadis are suffering from that disease, because they are afraid of energy and opulence and thus they take to renunciation. Wherever there is opulence, youth or beauty, they are afraid, because they are worshippers of the negative side. If they go to enjoy, the reaction will come to get them. But vaisnavas know how to utilize everything for the service of the Lord. So they are not afraid of anything good. All good, attractive, beautiful things, everything they will utilize for the service of the Lord. If our association with the environment is sadhu sanga, with real beauty and love in truth, then everything will come to help us in our search for Krsna, Reality the Beautiful.

## **The Magnanimous Nature of Sri Nityananda Prabhu**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Today is the appearance day of Sri Nityananda Prabhu. He is supposed to be the incarnation of Baladeva in Vrajamandala. Narottama das Thakur says 'Balaram haila Nitai'. Sanatana Goswami also mentions Nityananda Prabhu as the incarnation of Baladeva in Vrndavana, but some persons within the Gaudiya sampradaya preach that Nityananda Prabhu is the incarnation of Radharani.

So, a vehement protest is given from the side of the Gaudiya Math and we cannot recognize them as the true followers of Gaudiya Vaisnava faith and Mahaprabhu. Nityananda Prabhu took His birth in the district of Virbhum on the Western side of Katwa, north west of Ekachakra, where the Pandavas in disguise lived for sometime.

Nearby is also shown a tree where the Bakaraksasa was killed by Bhimasena. In Ekachakra near Garbhavasa and many other places, we can trace the pastimes of Nityananda Prabhu.

Nityananda Prabhu's son established a temple nearby, and Sri Murtis were installed by Him. About two hundred years ago there was a great storm in that area and many ancient arrangements were devastated. A big Zamindar and devotee of the Gaudiya Sampradaya came and restored the puja, the worshipping arrangements at Virachandrapura. All were desolated at that time.

Nityananda Prabhu's mother's name was Padmavati, and His father's name was Hadai Pandit. Ojha was their title although now we do not find any such title.

When Nityananda Prabhu was about 12 years old one sannyasi came and begged Hadai Pandit for his son "I want your son." The sannyasi came and begged for the child, only one son, and son like Nityananda Prabhu who was very charming. It was almost impossible to live bidding goodbye to such a son, but what to do? A sannyasi has come and asked for him and begging they could not avoid; they could not avoid the sannyasi, they had to give their only son to him. We are told, that sannyasi was no other than Sri Madhavendra Puri, the guru of Iswara Puri, Advaita Acharya, and Pundarika Vidyanidhi. That sannyasi came and took Nityananda Prabhu away from His house when he was only 12 years old; and Nityananda Prabhu wandered with him through the whole of India, visiting all the holy places.

Mahaprabhu did not visit so many holy places. He generally travelled through the south of India, not northern India entirely, only Vrndavana and Prayag. Dvaraka and Badrinarayana were excluded by Mahaprabhu, but Nityananda Prabhu visited all the holy places that exist in India. After Madhavendra Puri disappeared, he was wandering in the holy places. In the meantime Mahaprabhu coming back from Gaya began his Sankirtana Lila in Nabadwipa.

Nityananda Prabhu was wandering here and there and lastly he went to Vrndavana. He was searching for something because of His inner identification with that of Baladeva. When Krsna came he was feeling some tendency of attraction towards him. In the last period, he began searching in Vrndavana very scrutinizingly but did not find that. Then he got some inspiration, "Where to find Krsna?" 'He is now in Nabadwip,' "I shall go there," with this inspiration in his heart he came to Navadwipa Dhama.

Mahaprabhu had already begun his sankirtana movement, and he had a dream at night that someone came in a chariot and at the peak of the chariot there was a palm tree; and he is searching, "Where is Nimai pandit's house? Where is Nimai

Pandit's house?" Someone then said, "Here is Nimai Pandit's house." Mahaprabhu then told to the devotees, "A great personage has come here to Nabadwipa Dhama last night. You (Srivasa and others) try to find out that great person." The followers tried their best, they searched in every nook and corner but could not find Nityananda Prabhu. They reported to Mahaprabhu "we tried our best but could not trace any noble person, any saint, or any big man.

"Then Mahaprabhu told, 'Let us try with the followers.'" He then went straight to the southern side of Nandana Acharya's Bhavan. Mahaprabhu went directly to a particular house which is known as Nandana Acharya's house, and there they found a new gentleman, stout and strong, and golden in appearance, sitting on the veranda of that house. The devotees of Mahaprabhu could then understand him to be the man of whom Sri Gaurangadeva was telling about. He was sitting there in red robes, all others were white dressed. Someone then chanted some Bhagavata sloka, and so many spiritual symptoms gradually appeared in his body.

They could then understand what a great man he is for he was filled with divine love. He was the agreed personage and gradually coming in intimate connection with him they could understand that he was Sri Nityananda Prabhu. Outwardly his movements were not like a scholarly person, or an ordinary man; he was surcharged with a high type of energy and divinity coming forth from his complexion.

Mahaprabhu gradually began preaching, Haridasa Thakura and Nityananda Prabhu were both given orders. "Go from door to door and request them to leave everything aside and take the name of Krsna. Whomever you may meet going from door to door, approach and ask them to take the name of Krsna leaving aside everything else." At that time Nabadwip Dhama was mostly filled with trantrics, that is the worship of Sakti Devi and Maya Devi.

"This Maya is disturbing us, so we must take shelter under her feet. When she will be satisfied then she will loosen, open the door and we will get out and become Siva. By nature, by birth, jiva means Siva, Siva means the master of Maya. We are now in the clutches of Maya, misunderstanding. When the goddess of misunderstanding is satisfied with us, she will then withdraw and we shall find a door out, we shall go to the other side.

There are so many liberated souls there and we shall join them. They are all

enjoying the position of Siva, the master of Maya. Maya cannot force them to do anything and everything as she wills, rather she serves her masters. Maya serves Siva, the liberated souls. Maya serves them though in the relativity of Maya, but they cannot control so they render some service to the liberated souls and they are known as Siva. Pasa baddho bhavet jiva pasa mukta Sadasiva.

When within bondage he is jiva, a fallen soul, when he is outside the bondage of this Maya, this misunderstanding, then he's always Siva. He can then move here and there at his sweet will and Maya cannot force him, rather she will come to serve him, and that is liberation. We shall then serve Maya devi, and the tantric process involves something, in this way she will be satisfied.

They use many things, they may drink wine and eat meats. They offer them to the deities Maya, Sakti and Kali. They also enjoy the women in different moods. They think that the application of mixing with ladies is such, that they will get liberation from the charm of the ladies. In this way in their process, they approve of the wine, the meat and the ladies it seems to be very harmful to us but these are the underlying principles of the tantric upasana."

In our method, our process of approaching these things which we feel temptation for, we shall get liberation from them. They come to attract us towards them but by a particular process we shall handle them. We shall be masters of those poisonous things, and at that time Navadvipa was filled with such persons.

When Mahaprabhu, Sri Gauranga begun his preaching attempt that everyone should give up everything and take to the name of Krsna, Narayana, he then said, "Not only will you, be out of Maya but you will attain positive life in Vaikuntha, in Vrndavana." That is higher attainment, and what is to be attained by worshipping the sakti in the method they are following, that is reactionary and sometime again they will have to evolve. This is mentioned in the sastra, but not very extensively. If you are very particular, then you will have to see that in the relativity of this negative world; but it is not safe.

You must enter the positive world then you will be safe. That is not only mere liberation, emancipation from the opposite forces, but practical participation in the serving line, which is very pure. Not to be non-selfish, but must be God-centred, God-serviced. The positive world is there and that is full of pervasive happiness, and that we can attain only through service. Here we are an enjoying unit, an exploiting unit, but it must be given up to get out of the reactionary

tendency of life; but we must not wait on the fence, for that is not a safe position.

Then again, that is not paying much because withdrawal from the negative side is not enough. There is a positive world and that is meant for a real high form of life, and that can be attained through service. Service is great, to sacrifice one's own interest, not for any part but for the whole, the absolute good, that is great. Nothing can be compared to that. It is calculative and automatic. To reach the automatic stage of service with love is high pay; so give up all these habits and these former engagements with a lower standard of worshipping, penance and all these things. "Die to Live." A radical change must be welcome in life.

Life is worth living, life is worth living and it is only open to the human section. In other species it is impossible to get a glimpse of such high light and to begin that way of life, for there are only a very few human beings in the creation. What are the number of human bodies, very small compared to the whole of creation, and that is the door to heaven so you must try to have a positive life. He is Krsna, He is all attractive, He is beautiful, He is the highest reality, He is all accommodating and most charming.

Our life will receive its fulfillment if we can approach that Lord, especially by taking His Holy name. In this age of Kali a special sanction has been given to us that by taking the holy name with satsanga, with the real saints, then we can make progress, enter and approach that high line of preaching.

Nityananda Prabhu was a dynamo of energy and Haridasa Thakura could not follow, a little trouble to carry out the order of Mahaprabhu, what to do?

One day there were so many gunda type persons, they came with an attacking spirit, "You are disturbing us, we are not religious and you have come to preach religion to us; what right have you got? Why do you come to disturb us? As a big society we are following a particular creed, and you are so bold as to blame us for not being religious men. You have come with a new idea of religion and we are to accept that, you fools!

If again you come here you will be taught a good lesson." In this way they were threatened, but Mahaprabhu still says you must go. Then one day they met Jagai and Madhai. Jagai and Madhai were from Brahmin birth but they did not have any care for religion. They were also entrusted with some administration in the Muslim Government. They had some connection with the Government and they themselves were gundas, although Brahmins by birth. They used to take

anything and everything. They were a notorious pair of gundas, Jagadananda and Madhavananda.

Then one day they met him “Oh! You rogues, we have heard of you, you have come to create a new religion here – Never! If we find you again on the street you will receive a licking and will have to weep.” Anyhow, they were given such warning. Nityananda Prabhu had to report every day what progress they had made in their preaching campaign and he almost challenged Mahaprabhu. He said “our life was saved today from the worst pair in the whole of Navadvipa Dham, but if you can deliver them, then I shall think that you have really come to render some service.

They are the greatest rogues ever found in this area and must be converted. If you can do that then we shall say that you have got some power with some objective, and you will be able to do something.” Mahaprabhu felt, “If it is Krsna’s will then everything will be possible.” They again went out preaching and they met those two gundas, Haridasa Thakura coming back and Nityananda Prabhu stood courageously. There was an earthen pot cast away after used on the side of the way. It was taken and thrown on the head of Nityananda Prabhu and his forehead was cut, blood oozing, Nityananda Prabhu standing.

Some person came to Gaurangadeva saying that Nityananda Prabhu was wounded by the rogues. Mahaprabhu very enraged and excited came there. There was blood oozing, “Who has caused this wound on the body of Nityananda Prabhu? I shall finish the whole town, come forward” Mahaprabhu was besides Himself. Then Nityananda Prabhu came, “No! No! Don’t be excited my Lord, in this incarnation we are not to use any force; remember it.” Nityananda Prabhu then reminded Mahaprabhu.

In the meantime there another man approached and told “No, no! They are red-clad mendicants what fame is there in striking them. They are not wholly established rich men or party men, only red-clad sannyasis - there is no credit by killing them or beating them,” and they took Jagai and Madhai away. Nityananda Prabhu then appealed to Mahaprabhu. “What to do, this is not proper. In this age in this time at this juncture what have we come to do, use force? Never!”

In the meantime Madhai came to hit Nityananda Prabhu but Jagai saved him by just opposing him and Mahaprabhu turned around suddenly, “You Jagai, you have protected my Nityananda.” Mahaprabhu then embraced him and Jagai fell

at his feet and began to cry “Hare Krsna.” Mental transformation came in Jagai, then Madhai who was standing there said, “for this deed we are two, such a sin, and Jagai’s condition is such,” In that atmosphere his transformation also began. Then Nityananda Prabhu came to recognize that in the same place with similar persons, one will gain and the other will fail and so he must also be saved.

Then Mahaprabhu said, “Nityananda Prabhu himself is pleading for you, and so you Madhai, you should also be absolved,” Mahaprabhu then embraced him, he also fell, began to weep, and took the holy name Krsna, and there was wholesale conversion of these two great demons. There was within minutes an uproar in the town. “Who is this Nimai Pandita, a scholar, so far we can understand but he is endowed with supernatural power. These two great demons, whoever they came across, or whoever would see them would enter their homes and close their doors, such demoniac persons they were, and they were converted by Nimai Pandita within one hour, what miraculous power.”

So in this way Nimai Pandit, got some footing there. Nimai Pandit is not an ordinary, he is not merely a scholar but he is endowed with some supernatural power, original power. Nityananda Prabhu was famous from that time. Although he was hit on the forehead and blood oozed still he had so much of an extraordinary, patient, forbearing and affectionate heart, that he recommended that gunda who had caused him mischief. Nityananda Prabhu’s position was very safe and very high, a divine position from that time. Nityananda Prabhu has neither an exploiting nor enjoying mood, he is wholeself given to Krsna. Sanatana Goswami has given this in his commentary: In the rasa lila of Krsna, Krsna was enjoying all the gopis, at that time Balarama also had his separate rasa lila.

It is also mentioned in Bhagavatam and other puranas, that Krsna had His rasa lila and that Baladeva also had his rasa lila, but Sanatana Goswami has given the meaning. That is very fine, very subtle and very difficult to understand. Baladeva continued rasa externally, but in his heart he was making Krsna to participate in that rasa. He was not the party to enjoy the gopis. He is aloof, he is aside, he is only performing, managing the rasa lila with the gopis and Krsna. He is not only indifferent but with so much serving tendency and wholeself serving attitude.

In Vrndavan mandala in vatsalya rasa and sakhya rasa, they also have marriages, they have their sons, but not in any enjoying mood. There is union of men and women but not in an enjoying mood, or then they will have to be left here in the

material world. Both parties meet and are united in a serving mood, that is particularly another type of mood, never an enjoying mood, or then they are not to be allowed to enter that domain.

They will be thrown here in the land of exploitation. When they go through the door of emancipation, liberation and enter Vaikuntha, from there also the exploiting tendency is eliminated, what avoidance! They are outwardly participating but internally in a serving mood. It may be impossible to think but it is such, not only the human form but also the birds and beasts, they are also apparently mixing in an enjoying mood, but really their mood is of service attitude. Such a wholesale transformation has to be effected in ones heart, mind and body, before wholly attempting to enter into that domain.

So Hegel said, “Die to live”, if you really want to live in that plane then you will have to die wholesale as you think you are in this life as flesh blood and bones. It is of opposite type, the purity is there, it can be measured; it is not non-scientific but it is really scientific. It is the process of “die to live”! And love is there, the dying tendency for the object of love, that is love proper otherwise it is imitation, it is hypocrisy, it is conspiracy to ones own suicidal attainment. The pure thing is that if we have got faith for such divine conception of life then we should come to Bhagavatam, the last gift in the sastric world of vedic literatures.

Vyasadeva’s last gift in the world of vedic literatures is Bhagavatam. The Bhagavatam is so high, so high, prithi vite yata katha dharma nam chole. Our Guru Maharaj’s translation dharmah projjhito kaitavo all the words and tales that are running in this world in the name of religion, Srimad Bhagavatam says all is false, all is false, all is tampered with and not pure, not pure! The pure type of religion is not yet spoken. It is there, all self-centered, the current is towards the centre, not only selflessness but self sacrificing, self forgiving, self forgetfulness, in that way we are to start, we are to start, we are to go.

Sri Nityananda Prabhu came and appealed, “Come to Gauranga, He is the depot, He is the dynamo to send you there very easily. He sang these names of Gauranga on the banks of the Ganges. “Bhaja Gauranga, kaha Gauranga, laha Gauranga nam je jan Gauranga bhaje se amar pran; all you people come and take refuge under the divine feet of Gauranga, give up everything and come fall at the feet of Gauranga. Take His name, remember Him and throw yourself wholly at His disposal. He is my own life, I consider Him to be my life, my soul, my everything.” Nityananda Prabhu saying this began to roll at the door of the

householders “Householders! You must do this.” He is rolling and crying, “Accept Gauranga, you don’t know what great benefit you will receive by doing this.”

He is rolling in the dust at the door of the householders with such an appeal. He came to the ordinary masses to give them shelter at the lotus feet of Gauranga, that is Nityananda Prabhu. He came to give Mahaprabhu even to Jagai and Madhai and he appealed to all from door to door to accept Gaurangadeva. You do not know what will be your prospect in life, the highest prospect in life! Nityananda Prabhu is our only hope, He is so benevolent, so generous, so gracious, that very easily we can draw his attention and we can get his recommendation. Gaurangadeva will not be able to disregard his recommendation, and when we have got the grace of Gauranga then the Radha-Krsna lila is within our fists. Nityananda Prabhu’s grace means to get Mahaprabhu’s grace within our clutches and to get Mahaprabhu, means to get Radha-Govinda, Vrndavana, and then everything is within our fists.

### **The meaning of sadhu-sanga**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** You are holding a marginal position. Your limited free will is your capital. You should always utilize that towards the Godly side, taking one away from the satanic side.

This limited capital that you have, you are to begin your business with that. But you think, when you get a good capital, then you will begin business? This is imagination! “Whatever little capital I have got, I shall start my business with that. My attention, my energy will help me in the future.”

A man has an accident in the journey and he loses consciousness. But, when a little consciousness is regained, what should he do? He will utilize that consciousness directing, “Take this body to my guardians, my home is there. Oh my friend, carry my body to my home.”

This will be the best benefit of that limited consciousness which returned to the man – he was able to use his good knowledge. An intelligent man will consider that whoever will take care of this body with care and affection is the best prospect for its rehabilitation. Therefore, he shall request to place this body under their care.

So, whatever awakening we have in consciousness, we shall utilize that by placing ourselves in the care of Godly persons; only then there is value of devotion to God. Those who know the value of devotion to God, they are our near relations. They will appreciate this inner awakening, and they will take care of my devotional self. This is the penultimate benefit of sadhu-sanga: when medicine or our own attempts cannot heal us, the doctor advises us to make a change. Then the air and the water will naturally come to help improve our health. So, also, the atmosphere of saintly persons improves our spiritual health. Anyway, to always remain in the company of devotees in the same sampradaya – the same line – but superior devotees, by taking the lower position, such association is most desirable for any person aspiring to progress spiritually.

Srila Rupa Goswami has given the gist of the advice in Bhakti-rasamrta sindhu: “We are to associate with those superior to us, but in the same line of the Gaudiya Vaisnava devotees in Krsna consciousness. They also carry the same conception of the spiritual truth, but superior to me. If I engage myself even as a sweeper in that camp, it will be highly valuable for my future spiritual life.”

What is bad in me, I am responsible for that. You are responsible for seeing, for coming in connection with that vision. There are also good dealings in another sphere. Why have you come to see this misjudgement and mistreatment of so many who are quarrelling with each other? There are so many good dealings and you have not acquired a position to remain in that layer? Then why? “I am responsible for all the undesirable things in me – that is a fact. My weak free will has taken me down into this present undesirable environment and no one else is responsible.”

This fact you are to realize. If you ignore this, then you are in maya – misconception, illusion. When you sincerely realize this position, then your dark days will come to an end. When you feel that only you yourself are responsible for all these miserable things, then good days will awaken for you. This is the fact. It is not only a conception to achieve some end. It is not an imaginary conception to take help of in order to get out of the present condition. It is not

like that: it is a fact, it is for everyone whether good or bad – he is responsible. Neither God nor Satan is responsible. There are two sides: good and bad. We are responsible for the freedom that is given to us.

God is not responsible for the fall of Adam and Eve into this world. Satan was present and he was trying to entice her. Why shall we accept the advice of Satan which is to take fruit from the tree of knowledge? This is the result of a loss of faith in God. This is a fall from the stage of surrender to God. This is a misuse of our own valuable free will. Then the result is, we have to come to this world and eat by the sweat of our brow, by our own labour – “Labour and Live”. Before, when we were in a surrendered position, God was feeding everyone of us. We cannot underestimate the circumstances. In the realm of God, everyone is being maintained.

Otherwise, when he takes charge of his own decision by his small faculty, then by the advice of Satan, he comes to take the fruit of “The Tree of Knowledge”, in order to exercise his own free will by coming down from the stage of surrender. It cannot be more clear. He misuses his freedom and comes to this world to labour and live in action and reaction. Vulnerability, weakness, independence and a paucity of free will is the cause to be traced. Neither God nor Satan can be held responsible or accountable for the fall of the soul. But to accept the advice of Satan depends on our free will and when free will is misused, we commit colossal mistakes. The soul subsequently has to fall down to this material world – leaving heaven.

The responsibility is with the free will that is vulnerable, weak and paltry due to not having full freedom. The smallest part of freedom we own, and by its misuse we come to this calculating world of action and reaction – labour and live. When we maintain our position in heaven where God is all-in-all – where we are his servants, then there is no sin and no fear.

The root possibility of fear comes from the association of a secondary cause. In heaven, all is harmonized and controlled by God. “I am there; I am His; I belong to Him; everything for Himself.” As long as I live in that atmosphere – “Everything for Sri Hari!” – then I am safe. But when I deviate from that consciousness – separate in interest from the common interest of God – then I shall have to come into this world of action and reaction. No one else is responsible for our displeasures. The environment is not responsible, you have acquired that. And any calculated plan to protect yourself against reactions of

your own doing is also an implication involving more reaction.

If suddenly I find myself in the prison house, then who is responsible? There are so many culprits, so many deceitful persons, so many thieves in the prison house. If I find myself in the midst of them, then who is responsible? I have acquired that position. There is also heavenly association but instead of that. “Why am I put in the prison house where, wherever I look I see culprits. Why am I here? Why am I not with heavenly association? Who is responsible? Who?” In this way,

I am to try and understand that I am responsible for being there. First, there must be the diagnosis, then the treatment and nursing. Nursing and treatment is good, but it must follow the diagnosis. The diagnosis is, “I am the culprit!” and the medicines must be applied accordingly. A thorough cure and not a patch-job is what will be advantageous. Then the thorough, wholesale treatment is like this:

*bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.8)

("One who, in the hope of achieving Your grace, goes on enduring the inauspicious fruits of his own karma, and passes his days practising devotion unto You in every thought, word and deed - such a person is heir to the land of freedom: he attains to the plane of positive immortality.") This is the magical cure for fault-finding. Srimad Bhagavatam recommends the system of a magical cure – this is the diagnosis proper.

Preaching must be on the basis of this truth. Otherwise, all is haphazard. The Srimad Bhagavatam’s preaching is like this – deep penetration to the root cause of the disease. Do the Vedas advocate a dreamless sleep induced by renunciation? That is not the conclusion accepted by the Srimad Bhagavatam. The Srimad Bhagavatam has accepted the wholesome organic life. It is unavoidable that we have to live with some particular paraphernalia. Complete retirement entering into Samadhi or dreamless sleep is also not the conclusion of life.

That is a temporary arrangement. But, permanent adjustment (sambandha-jnana) must be for Him. Everything is for Him. “I am for Him and not for myself. He is also holy, so accommodating and so good. I am for Him and that is my best prospect. My best prospect is with Him – the Absolute Good, the Organic

Whole, and I cannot leave that. I cannot look after my separate goals.

My goal must be part of the Whole – such adjustment is necessary. So, if I am to live in a holy atmosphere, in an organic environment, then I shall always be cautious and careful to detect my own fault.” Neither exploitation nor renunciation can give permanent solution – but “Dedication” will. The basis of dedication is that the eye is not faulty:

karmany evadhikaras te, ma phalesu kadacana  
ma karma-phala-hetur bhur, ma te sango ‘stv akarmani  
(Bhagavad-gita 2.47)

“The whole of your attention must be towards the discharge of your own duty without caring for the environment. That is in My command. I am to look after that. You must give your whole attention to the discharge of your own duty.” And, if all the units are wholly connected to discharge their own duty, then it will be heavenly. But when we would rather find fault with the environment – “They are thieves” – and I shall also become a thief – should that be the conclusion? Everything here is undesirable. I may not even know the extent of undesirability in me.

There are many things underground and they will gradually come to the surface. I shall then find, “Oh! All these undesirables are in me?” They must go out and then the real gems will come forth. The gold should be cast into the fire. When the alloy portion vanishes then the real gold will be visible. Now at present our condition is that this pure gold – it is mixed with some alloy. So, “Die to Live” – throw yourself into the fire. Your so-called ego at present is mixed with alloy and that alloy must be destroyed by the fire of suffering – fire means suffering – and the golden gems will then come out. Alloy is not a part of your body nor your soul – it is acquired.

The inner soul’s svarupa will then come forth. So, if you want to live a real proper, noble and holy life, then what you think you are at present – that must die. And preaching will be part of your adjustment. If this environment is not suitable, then I shall try another environment that may be more suitable to me. That is a small thing. But the main line is what I say and the small partial adjustment may vary differently from place to place. Anyhow, the main line must be – “No complaints against the environment”. A bad workman quarrels with his stool; the origin is the workman.

So, there is no benefit in quarrelling over the effect. That was food and in his association, it became stool. So, shall we preach against the injustices of the environment? Never. What is necessary you will feel from within – not as a pleasure but as a duty – and only if it comes from above, i.e., if you find some inspiration for the cause of the higher conception, and not for your personal cause.

If you go to criticize for your personal interest, then that fault will come back to you. It will enter into you. But if for purification, and not out of envy, you seek help from the higher, then you will be purified. Otherwise, you may find yourself in the same position the next moment. “I am vulnerable. What I am criticizing to be so bad, the next moment I may be left in such a deplorable position. I do not know the ways of the Infinite environment. I am a doll playing in the hands of the Infinite. “In the next moment, from human birth, I may have to go to a dog’s birth, a cat’s birth or an insect’s birth. They are descending into the mental system.”

So, don’t go to criticize. Don’t be hungry to find the fault of others. But if someone finds fault in you, then you may consult a higher authority – a more senior Vaisnava: “There have been some complaints against me. Whether or not they are valid, I don’t know. Please, can you help me to understand my defects.” – Such an enquiry has no envy, no spirit of competition that I am good and he is bad; it is devoid of mischievous motives underground. Only it must be endowed with pariprasnena – honest enquiry. Otherwise, I shall have to suffer.

So, “Physician, cure thyself,” before you attempt to cure others. This is your primary duty, then you will really be able to offer others a cure-all. In conclusion, my advice is that you should try to be submissive to the Vaisnava devotees. Submissiveness to them will promote your spiritual merit. We shall also pray to the Supreme Lord for such an attitude, “Oh Lord, my bad temperament stands in the way of my association with the devotees – please remove it.” The association with the devotees of the Lord is a primary necessity. It vastly improves our position with the Supreme if we always remain in prayer: “Oh my Lord, this bad temperament in me, this inconsiderate thinking and feeling – sentiments concerning the outer world – this is disturbing my association with the higher Vaisnava devotees.

They are the real source of improving our own inner wealth. So, please purify me by dismissing all these tendencies in my mind which the devotee section

does not adore.” We shall always try to be in such a position that the servants of the Lord will like our company and service. They would utilize me for this is my primal necessity. If they do not like my presence due to some contaminating disease or something, then it will be a loss to my spiritual life. So, we shall have to repent.

*mat-tulyo masti papatma, naparadhi ca kascana  
parihare ‘pi lajja me, kim bruve purusottama  
(Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.2.154)*

“If we slip and fall on the ground, then the ground is the only help by which we can stand erect; so we cannot leave the ground.” We shall sincerely pray, “Oh Lord, I am committing a mistake by disregarding You, ignoring You. I have no other alternative to get out of this disadvantage except by your help. I cannot correct myself. Under no condition can I leave you my Lord. If I commit mistake against You – an offense against You – still, only by Your help can I be purified. I have no other alternative. So, please forgive me and help me so that I may be saved by Your most intimate associates. It is so, because without their grace I may not be able to enter Your domain of Divine Love. It is only through the devotees that I may go. I have no other alternative.

There are so many agents. If I am disappointed by one agent, then I may try another in a mild temperament – without speaking much against that previous party.” It is better that we consider ourselves to be faulty. To put blame on another’s shoulder – that is ultimately not considered to be very happy or valuable. We should try and learn to blame ourselves. What is coming from outside I have no concern.

The Lord can see and He sees everything. He is seeing who is responsible. But, I won’t try to put the blame on others’ shoulders. It will not be fruitful. I shall gain if I can find fault within myself and not complain to others about the environment. The environment should be considered to be within His jurisdiction and it is really so. I am concerned with seeing the defect in myself only. If I attain success. I shall try to attribute it to others – to the grace of the devotees.

If any failure, then I shall try to find the cause within myself. Through this process, we can make real valuable progress and that is the most universal process of progress – to find fault with our own selves. I am responsible for this

disgraceful condition, but if there is any good, then that is coming from Him. He is All-Good. He is watching the environment and is in full control.

So, this is included in Him, in God's party. One party, myself; another party, God's. He controls everyone and He is conscious of their activities. This position would be very advisable. If without looking at the fault of others. I can search myself and find out that the fault is within me and not with them, then this is the key to success in spiritual life. Srimad Bhagavatam has advised us to go on this way. You will thrive, but when you are finding fault with others, then you will become a loser. This sloka from Srimad Bhagavatam is very effective, very true and safe in all respects.

It is also His Grace to be able to see that the environment is always helpful to you – even in punishment. When the mother is punishing the child, it is from the guardian's side – but it is for the good of the child. So, on the whole, the Lord and His paraphernalia are to vindictive. Yet the punishment comes – to correct you. They are fully aware of your defects and your real interest. They are all-affectionate. You are responsible. In this process, in time you will be purified to the highest degree. So, don't go to quarrel with the environment. That environment which you are presently facing, is a product of your own karma. You have acquired such environment according to your karma. So, the environment is produced by your own action. You cannot lodge any complaint against that as you yourself are responsible. This is true.

If you can accept such a truth in your sadhana in this life, then in no time at all, you shall prosper because Divine Grace will be attracted most intensely towards you.

*om tad visno paramam padam sada, pasyanti surayo diviva caksur-atatam  
tad vipraso vipanyavo jagrvamsah, samindhate visnor yat paramam padam*  
(Rig Veda 1.22.20)

“His vigilant eye, like the sun, is seeing everything and He is omniscient. His presiding guardian-eye over our heads is always looking for us.” We shall be able to draw His Sweet attention – His Divine Grace – towards us very soon if we take this miraculous process of seeing the defect within us – blaming ourselves and not the outside environment.”

## **The Mystery of all mysteries**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** In his Krsna-karnamrta (verse 107), Bilvamangal Thakur states, “Bhaktis tvayi sthiritara bhagavan yadi syad” – My Lord, if my dedication, my veneration to You is permanent – it is in a settled stage, daivena nah phalati divvya-kisora-murtih – and if it reaches to such a height that we can find divya-kisora-murtih – if we can reach so far to find out the eternal pastimes of the Divine Couple; if we can reach to this extent – then we will find mukti svayam mukalitanjali sevate ‘sman’ – Oh, the facility of liberation – emancipation – with folded palms will come to serve us in any way we like.

As well, dharmartha-kama-gatayah sramaya-pratiksah, dharma, the results of being dutiful – artha, the art of money-making – kama, the objects of sense perception – they are all ready and waiting outside for whenever a call comes from us to run to our front excited, “How can I serve you, my master, my Lord.”

That will be our position. Dharma, artha, kama will wait outside and whenever we will call them, they will present themselves, “What do you want me to do?” And mukti, liberation will always be moving around us with folded palms doing service of different types if, in our fortuitous position, we can rise up to such a height as to find that Divine Couple engaged in happy pastimes.”

Bilvamangala Thakura showed in his life, a peculiar example. How, from the house of a prostitute, he went straight to Vrndavan and got the grace of the Supreme Entity. How, in his life he was so much engrossed – almost swallowed up wholly – as a sensualist of the lowest type and yet, from that position in a single life, he could raise himself to the highest stage of realization of Reality the Beautiful.

Mahaprabhu took two books from South India; one was Brahma-samhita and the other Krsna-karnamrta. Krsna-karnamrta is about the pastimes of Vrndavana and Sri Brahma-Samhita shows the ontological basis of the Absolute – how the Lord of Vrndavana is the highest conception of Reality.

Krsna-lila is not a matter of history; in history events occur. They happen once and cannot reoccur at any time. History is a phenomenon in which what went on in the past never comes again. There is an expression that, “History repeats itself,” but that is in the similar nature of the event, not in the actual fact. History repeats its nature, but what is gone – is gone. But in Krsna-lila in the eternal world, it is not so. It may present the same thing every time – at every second. So, it is called nitya-lila, eternal pastimes – crossing the limitation and jurisdiction, of history. In history, what is past is dead. But in the pastimes of the Lord, they are always present, nitya – eternal.

He can show Himself in His eternal forms simultaneously. So, in His past, present and future, all events are simultaneously occurring. When He enters the arena of Kamsa, different groups are seeing Him in different ways. What is seen by one section of people is seen in a different way by another section, according to their own nature. Even the blind can see Him if He wills.

If He wills to show Himself to anyone – even the blind – they can see Him clearly, because the eyes of flesh are not necessary to see Him. By His will power alone, He can reveal Himself to any person. That was the case with Dhrtarastra in the Kuru-sabha. Dhrtarastra said, “For the time being, my Lord, restore my eyesight so that I can see Your wonderful form which others are seeing and praising. You can do anything, so for the time being, remove my blindness.”

“It is not necessary to remove your blindness, Dhrtarastra! I say, ‘You see Me,’ and you will see Me.” And by His order, Dhrtarastra saw! His order, His wish is everything. His simple will is everything – the cause of all existence. The Kurus wanted to see Draupadi naked, but Draupadi’s appeal reached Him and He sanctioned unlimited cloth – that cloth became infinite – of infinite character. As much clothing as they removed, so much cloth yet remained. It is the will, the vicara, which is everything. Such great potency of such high quality is in the Prime Cause. We are accustomed to think, “This is good; this is bad” and “This is possible; this is impossible.” But these rules do not apply in this case – in His case. All of our experience will fail to occupy even a negligible, miniscule part of His Kingdom.

He is wonderful. In the example of Vamanavatara it is told of His “Wonderful Stride” – adbutkrama. With one stride He covered the whole earth and with the next, He captured the whole of Heaven. He then needed a place to put His third

step, but where? He is adbutkrama. He, of wonderful stride – all His steps are wonderful. He is wonder personified – the source of all wonder to our tiny brain.

He is here. He is also everywhere with His full representation. He is everywhere and yet He is nowhere! Everything is in Him and nothing is in Him!

Krsna says to Arjuna, “Try to understand My peculiar position.” He is the Mystery of all mysteries. Even our own soul is astonishing to our worldly experience.

*ascaryavat pasyati kascid enam –  
ascaryavad vadati tathaiva canyah  
ascaryavac caiman anyah srnoti  
srutvapy enam veda na caiva kascit*  
(Bhagavad-gita 2.29)

“We do not even know the extraordinary nature of our own self. It is of a very high order.” But our attention is focused toward so many mortal things. We have been introduced to, and captured by, the meanest aspects of this world. This is the consequence of the mood of enjoyment.

We want to enjoy, we want to exploit – a good exploiter is a king to us. But exploitation in itself is degrading very mean and low. It takes us to the lowest position and makes us victims of a great reaction. Exploitation and enjoyment – we are in the midst of them and we do not know anything, cannot think of anything but enjoyment. We want to understand anything and everything in terms of enjoyment. We are in such a filthy degraded position: only, “Enjoyment, enjoyment” – that is exploitation. But to exploit is the meanest type of nature. It is hateful and we must get out of the clutches of that ghost of exploitation.

There is another ghost – renunciation, idleness. But the noble things is dedication – a dedicated life. There are two ghosts – one of renunciation; and the other of exploitation. We have to get out of that nightmare, that mania which is based on our tendency to measure things to be good or bad. In exploitation there is division into regular and irregular, or dharma and adharma.

And then there is renunciation. So many great stalwarts of that conception recommend a complete cessation of the dynamic life. A dead stop; but that should not be the prospect of any conscious man. A dead stop to life – is that any goal of life for the saner section?

A life of nobility, a life of dedication – not ordinary dedication for the environment, but to the Highest Good, the highest form of life. In the lower stage dedication is calculated; in the higher stage spontaneous, automatic, dynamically uncalculating instantaneous flow! Real joy is there. Joy resides there in quality and quantity; in every way, real life is there. Life is there and here it is casting the worst shadow a perverted reflection. Yet we are told uddhared atmanatmanam the key is in our own hand. The freedom by which we can associate with anything good or bad and reap the accorded result is in our hand. How is it so? We are parched for freedom and yet the key is in our hand?

Ultimately, we are told that the key is in our own hand. No one else is to be blamed for our present condition, but there is always the possibility of noble help being extended to us, and we must accept that. Our past actions also influence us a great deal – whether they were good, bad or of the eternal aspiration – sukrti. But ultimately, the possibility of free action is not taken away from us at any stage – even if we are reduced to the level of taking birth as a tree! There also, the freedom is within. It is hard to think that a tree has got independence – free will – but it is there, in a suppressed state.

Freedom is within us also. We may try as far as possible to understand how it is so. Because our freedom is covered by so many conditions, we may think that we are not free – that we are forced by circumstances – it may seem so. Still, we are free for our selection of any path – good or bad. Our existence is very small and so, our freedom is also small and meager. But it is there. Though almost negligible, still, it is – it exists.

## **The Name of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math**

**Devotee:** You have given the name of your mission as ‘Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math.’ What is the meaning of ‘Chaitanya Saraswat’?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** First there was ‘Chaitanya Math’, and ‘Saraswati’ is our Gurudev. So Chaitanya-Saraswat – this name indicates the line from Chaitanya to Saraswati, our Gurudev – the knowledge that has come from Sri Chaitanyadev up to Prabhupada Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Within that Divine Dispensation we are to revere, accept and preach. It is indicating the angle of vision of our Guru Maharaj, Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur, about Sri Chaitanyadev; the way he saw it with his divine eyes. It is available here, and we are concerned with that. From Chaitanya to Saraswati, the whole of our Guru Parampara is covered, considered, cultured and being preached and spread. This is Chaitanya Saraswat.

Also, Chaitanyanuga Saraswati. Saraswati means *vani*, *vakya*:the words or expressions of Chaitanya. Chaitanya-vani is the real preaching and instructions of Sri Chaitanyadev.

So the substantial meaning is ‘from Chaitanya to Saraswati’. It is the culture of Srimal-Bhagavatam as viewed by Sri Chaitanyadev and His followers up to Saraswati. This is the object, theme and purpose of our life. Our nature and acquaintance is there. They are our masters, and we are the servants of that group. We want to revere them, to propagate knowledge about them, and to ask people to accept them. Our whole concern is there.

There is a class of Saraswata Brahmanas in the Maharashtra area of India who say they are Guada Brahmanas or Saraswata Brahmanas. Saraswat are a particular group who are under Sri Chaitanyadev. This may be another meaning.

additionally, in Manu-samhita it is mentioned:

*saraswati-drsadvatyor deva-nadyor yad antaram  
tam deva-nirmmitam desam brahmavarttam prachaksate*

The Arya civilisation came from upcountry. First it was between the two rivers Saraswati and Drsadvati. Vyasadev and other authorities all belonged to Badarikasram, in that quarter. Badarikasram is just on the banks of the River Saraswati. Vyasadev used to live there, and Narada Muni came to give dictation about the principles of Bhagavatam there at Badarikasram on the banks of Saraswati. Vyasadev also taught the principles of Bhagavatam to Sukadev at Badarisasram on the banks of the Saraswati.

Ambarisa Maharaj also lives in that area. It is mentioned that he used to live by the Saraswati river which joins the Ganges near Badarikasram. It is mentioned in Bhagavatam that he performed hundreds of sacrifices on the two banks of the Saraswati River. These took place in very ancient times. At that time the Himalayas were considered as the most recently formed mountains. Though the Himalayas were the highest mountains, they were also considered to be the youngest. Where the Himalayas rose became very cold, and the people came down to inhabit the plains.

With the rising up of the Himalayas the lands also rose up out of the sea, thus increasing the land mass of India. The seat of ancient civilisation was there, but as it rose in height, the people came down to the warmer coastal regions. The original seat of Vedic or Arya civilisation was on that side, and gradually it spread itself towards the coast. It is from the banks of the Saraswati that the Vedic culture began. Gradually it has been extended towards this side.

East Bengal and this area by the Ganges is ancient, but many other areas have sprung up from the sea. In the south of India some areas are also ancient. So, the Saraswata Brahmanas are a particular group of Brahmanas who uphold the Vedic culture. They are supposed to have their residence now in the Upper Himalayas, and they are gradually coming this side.

Our Temple is 'Chaitana-Saraswata', distinct from the Saraswata Brahmanas. So, Chaitanya Saraswata is the line of Bhagavatam as enhanced by Sri Chaitanyadev. Of all the Acharyas, Chaitanyadev preached about Love Divine. Clearly and in a developed, scientific way, only Chaitanyadev preached the fifth end of life: Bhagavat-Prema- The end of life is to acquire Love, affection and attraction for Godhead, for Krsna. Krsna is the Lord of Love and He is the innermost conception of Godhead. The highest conception of Godhead is in Krsna. The jiva can have a relationship with Him – the relationship of Love – and that is the highest achievement for all souls, ever known to have come down to the world.

Thus Chaitanya-Saraswata is exclusively Chaitanyanuga Saraswata – Saraswata that belongs to the School of Sri Krsna Chaitanyadev. They are believers in Krsna consciousness and Chaitanyadev's instructions. Saraswat means that the communication is with sound or words –a Treasure of words. Here, sound refers to the Holy Names. Their business is with Divine Sound. Their duty is with the transaction of Divine Sound. And what sort of

Divinity? Krsna consciousness sound business. That is their trade. They are engaged in the transaction of the Divine Sound of Krsna: Krsna consciousness.

Krsna consciousness is a philosophical ontological expression, but Krsna Chaitanya consciousness means that Chaitanya is there. His name is Krsna Chaitanya. Srila Swami Maharaj called his society ISKCON, but the public has given it a very warm welcome by calling it ‘the Hare Krsna Movement.’ But ‘Krsna consciousness’ is an ontological expression that can be realised by the philosophically-minded. In the Name ‘Krsna Chaitanya’ – ‘Chaitanya’ means ‘consciousness’ – so ‘Krsna consciousness’ means ‘Krsna Chaitanya’. The Name is there personified.

When I asked Sripad Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj why he was fond of the name “ISKCON” he had given for his society, he replied, “‘isa-con’ – isavasyam idam sarvvam!”

**Devotee:** Who, or which races, are the descendants of the Aryans? There seem to be differing opinions.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** I do not know the conclusions of the present-day historians, but as a matter of faith we find that those who follow the Vedic culture are Aryans. ‘Arya’ means venerable, principal. Here in India there is a custom that the wife addresses the husband as ‘Arya-putra’. ‘Arya’ also means ‘grand’ – ‘those who are revered, those who hold the highest culture’. At the beginning of creation those who held the highest culture commanded such reverence from all.

In the course of time, under different circumstances, perhaps they had to move to different places. Of course, it may be thought that they are somewhere near the Caspian Sea. Caspian: Kasyapa. Kasyapa is understood to be the father of the gods. Nearby, the Rsis are mainly residing on the other side of the Himalayas.

Then, as I mentioned before, it is said that the Himalayas gradually rose up and formed some sort of partition. Some ended up on the other side, some on this side. That does not matter so much, as we are not as concerned with the geography as the culture. We have to make a comparative study of all available cultures and try to conceive their height, and wherever the high culture may be found we will accept that. It does not matter where it is found.

In recent days you have asked me many questions about the Siksa and Diksa

Gurus. The Diksa-Guru and Siksa-Guru can also be seen from both the relative and the absolute position. Sometimes in this connection I like to quote a barrister by the name of Norton. Now, Aurobindo Ghosh was a very powerful writer. He knew good English and was very forceful in his writing. Once, when he had absconded and was being searched for by the authorities, Mr. Norton, a barrister of strong common sense, read an article in the newspaper; he recognised its style and declared: “Here is Mr. Ghosh!”

In this way we have to find where Kṛṣṇa is. Vyāsadeva has given the Kṛṣṇa conception of Godhead in his Srimad-Bhagavatam. Devaṁsi Narada came to instruct Vyāsadeva to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness of Godhead, for without that everything is tasteless: “Whatever you have delivered until now, will all be tasteless and redundant if you do not ultimately connect it with Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

The general Vedic culture could not reveal the meaning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness properly. At the time of Rāsa-Līlā the Śruti, the higher Vedas personified, are admitting, “We failed to express You, my Lord. We could not understand that You are so beautiful and so loving. We failed to distribute Your such higher conception to the public.” The Śrutis are confessing this. “Mostly what we have so far given the public to understand is somewhat Brahma or Paramātmā, but now we are charmed! There is such beauty within! So charming, so loving. We failed to understand, and we also failed to deliver. May we be forgiven for our failure.”

Then Srimad-Bhagavatam came. Śrutiḥ vimrgyam: all the revealed truth is only trying to show the direction, “Go this side. WE do not know it fully, but we can say that it must be somewhere this side.” This is the general instruction of all the revealed truth in the world. “It is very sweet. It must be very sweet, high and fulfilling our highest need, and more. But we could not understand this. It is so loving, so charming and so beautiful as to attract us to the utmost – we even forget our own existence. We could not understand this!” This is the confession of the general revealed truth of different types. This has been given in Srimad-Bhagavatam by Vedavyāsa and by Narada, Śuka, etc.

Kṛṣṇa is there at the very root. And Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Chaitanya-deva is at the root of the distribution of the highest degree of sweetness of the Lord. So we are surrendered to Him. And He says that this should be spread throughout the length and breadth of the infinite world.

Although prthivite ache has been mentioned in different places, prthivi ‘paryyanta’ yata nagaradi-grama.... must be noted. This means that Mahaprabhu’s preaching of Sri Hari-Nama will spread to not only the towns and villages on the earth, but to all the villages and towns of all the planets – wherever there are villages and inhabitants to be traced anywhere. Brahmandatarite – His Mission is to deliver the whole universe. Brahmanda means that which is created by one Brahma. Space and time is controlled by one Brahma. There are so many ‘andas’. ‘Anda’ means egg. There are so many egg-like solid objects floating in the air. Again, like so many eggs innumerable planets are floating in the air.

## **The Only Enjoyer**

Real selflessness is not shown in the conception of renunciation, which is only mere withdrawal from the negative side. But there is a positive side of divinity: self-giving. And self-giving to the extreme will go to Krishna, the autocrat. He will absorb everything; He is the only enjoyer. Our Guru Maharaj, in his famous poetry wrote, “Dusta mana! Tumi kiser Vaisnava?” “My wicked mind, how can you claim to be a Vaisnava?”

That is the heading of the poem written by our Guru Maharaj, Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. “Oh, my wicked mind, how can you think that you are a Vaisnava proper?” There he has given one line, “Kaminir kama nahe tava dhama, tahara malika kevala yadav.” “The enjoyment, the pleasure, that one gets from the association of ladies should only be desired for Krsna, and no one else. One gentleman came to enquire, “what do you mean by this expression?” “But what I mean there is clear.”

The man responded, “Then where is our position?”

“You have no position,” a clear answer.

None are to enjoy but Krsna. That is reserved for Him only. This is the “Krsna conception.” Also in Vaikuntha the tendency to be subservient prevails, although

not so much as in Krsna-lila.

### A Hard Nut To Crack

There are three things, Narayana is the master of kanak: money, wealth, aisvarya. All wealth, energy, belongs to Narayana. And all pratistha, the credit, belongs to Gurudeva, Baladeva, Radharani. And all pleasure is reserved only for Krsna. It is very hard to crack the nut, to understand these three things. Then we can come to realize our position. If these three things are reserved for these three principal entities of the highest order, then what is our position? Where are we? And who are we? Our position is secondary in the objective side. With our wealth we may be suppliers to Krsna, in this respect. And the pratistha is all coming from Gurudeva. The main capitalist is Gurudeva – Baladeva or Radharani in the original position. We are making transactions with his property. We are like small industrialists who take delivery of the articles from the big industrialist, and then take them to the market for ordinary sales. The Krsna consciousness we are spreading is like that. From Gurudeva we take the articles and sell them in the market. This refers to Krsna-katha, and to all other things.

We belong to a secondary, subordinate position. We are not owners of potency – we are but a part of the potency. Being constitutionally potency, we have no freedom to enjoy. The master of the potency is to enjoy it, and we are to supply His enjoyment. He is the master while we are many particles of potency, and thus our position is to be enjoyed, to be subservient to the higher. Herein lies our svarupa, our intrinsic identity. We shall be best situated if we can come to such an understanding. In a nutshell, this is Vaisnavism: we are not enjoyers – we are to be enjoyed; we are not positive – we are negative; we are not predominators – we are predominated.

### For Itself

Initially we will have to abandon both enjoyment and renunciation (bhoga-tyaga). And positively, we must come into connection with the plane of service (seva). This is possible by self-dedication and self-surrender. Such a conception is difficult to understand, and even more difficult to adopt and to follow. But the Supreme Lord is present. Because He is, everything is possible. Hegel's statement, "The Absolute is for Itself," assists us. Everything is for Him. This is the plenary movement of the Absolute, and we need to link ourselves with that movement.

*Aham hi sarvva-yajnanam, bhokta ca prabhur eva ca:* “I am the enjoyer of everything in this world. All sacrifices are to be performed knowing Me to be the recipient. This is your relationship with Me.”

### The Blind Man And The Cripple

*karya-karana-karttve, hetuh prakrtir ucyate  
purusah sukha-duhkhanam, bhktrtve hetur ucyate*  
(Bhagavad-gita, 13.21)

The action of the body and senses is said to be supplied by prakrti, or material nature (dominated by the conditioned soul). And the soul, although marginal by nature, is said to think himself an enjoyer of happiness or a sufferer of misery, on account of misidentifying himself with mundanity. The pure soul, however, does not conceive himself to be an enjoyer or purusa.

Similarly, in Sankhya philosophy, by the logic known as pangandha-nyaya – wherein a cripple is seated on the shoulders of a blind man and directs the blind man to his desired destination – the purusa (as the conditioned soul) is considered to be crippled and the prakrti (as material nature) is considered to be like a blind man who possesses full energy to move although he cannot guide. Thus, the guide is the purusa, who can see – the guide is consciousness, or intelligence. And the blind energy can move and work. The purusa possesses consciousness, and the feelings of pain and pleasure exist within that consciousness. Yet, his consciousness is inert and passive, and his activity is performed by the agency of another energy. This, in other words, is the conception of a lower plane of activity. Still, consciousness does not evolve from matter as supposed in any theory advocating “fossilism”.

### The Positive Life Of The Soul

There is no necessity of movement for the soul in this mundane world. He is inactive, indifferent, and passive in this lower enjoying plane. He does not participate in this negative plane of existence – he is meant for the positive side, in divinity. Yet, admitting the presence of the soul in the background, the prakrti or material nature works on his behalf.

Our Guru Maharaj gave this example: a minor may become the proprietor of an estate, and his managers, taking advantage of his youth, may loot and enjoy his estate. Similarly, the position of the conditioned soul (baddha jiva) is like that of a minor. He cannot control the rebellious managers. He must have the contact of

a major soul, and with that help he can subjugate his managers and regain control of his own property.

Thus, a fallen soul's position is just like that of a minor proprietor in a helpless situation. He is inactive and the managers are conducting all the affairs, but they are usurping everything in the name of the proprietor. The soul is inactive and non-participating. But his managers (body, mind, senses, etc.) are working on his behalf as though supported by him. If his real interest is aroused within his heart by a major soul who is connected with the Supersoul (Paramatma), the Supreme Lord (Bhagavan), the soul will achieve his intrinsic position. He will control the senses and utilize them in the service of the Lord, realizing, "Everything is for Him: everything is for Krsna, not for me."

## **The Path of the Heard**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Any question?

**Devotee:** In the Bhagavad-gita 7.19, Krishna says:

*bahunam janmanam ante,  
jnanavan mam prapadyate  
vasudevah sarvam iti,  
sa mahatma sudurlabhah*

("After many, many births, the *jnani*, person in knowledge (who happens to achieve the association of My pure devotee) finally comes to understand that the whole universe of moving and stationary beings is of the nature of Vasudeva, alone, in as much all are subordinate to Vasudeva. (I, as Vasudeva am the source and substance of all that be.) Having grasped this conception, he surrenders unto Me. Know such a great soul to be extremely rare.") What exactly is the meaning, here?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** From 'brahma' conception, the different instalments

follow. In brahma realisation, there is a ‘mass’ of consciousness: ‘all-consciousness’. Then, the next step will come: the consciousness is of individual character – with deeper vision, individuality is added to consciousness. There is consciousness plus individuality.

In fact, no consciousness can exist without individuality, without personality. So, the consciousness is personal: personality and consciousness, they cannot be separated, one from the other. What is differentiated from personality, that is only the halo of the personality – it is something like that. And that ‘halo’ that brahma – is also the combination of minutest personality, of souls.

Substance is of two kinds: ksara, or changing, perishable; and aksara, unchanging, eternal. In the Bhagavad-gita (15.16) Lord Krishna says: ksarah sarvani bhutani – whatever we see in the changing aspect of the world, that is called ksara. And what is unchangeable is called aksara. Then, He says:

*yasmat ksaram atito ‘ham  
aksarad api cottamah  
ato ‘smi like vede ca,  
prathitah purusottamah  
(Bhagavad-gita 15.18)*

“My existence transcends both of these two substances, ksara – aksara. So, I am purusottamah – My name is ‘Purusottama’. My glories are sung in the world and in the scriptures, as Purusottama, the Supreme Person.”

‘Purusottama’ means Vasudeva. So, *bahunam janmanam ante...*; after many births, when the jnanis, those of the impersonal school, come to understand that the Prime Cause of the consciousness of their quest is a personal one, then they come to conceive of Vasudeva.

But such jnanis are very rarely to be found. Mostly, jnanis cannot cross this line. They are lost there:

*ye ‘nye’ ravindaksa vimukta-maninas  
tvayy asta-bhavad avisuddha buddhayah  
aruhya krcchrena param padam tatah  
patanty adho ‘nadrta-yusmad anghrayah  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.32)*

“O lotus-eyed Lord, although non-devotees who accept severe penances and

austerities to achieve the highest position may think themselves liberated, their intelligence remains impure. They simply speculate in various ways and do not seek the means to take shelter of You. Because they have no regard for Your lotus feet, they simply fall down from their position of imagined superiority into material existence again".

Generally, it is the fate of the jnanis to climb up to the highest position with great effort, and then, when they cannot grasp that “consciousness means ‘person’” – they cannot cross that understanding – they have to revert back. They have to come back, fall back. And for those who can cross this line, who can understand that: “Yes, consciousness means person – a Big Personality, I am small ....”, bhakti begins there. The relation of subordination of the lower to the Higher, that comes into effect. And, sa mahatma sudurlabhah – such a person among the jnanis is very rarely to be found, who can take the positive connection of the higher aspect of life. Mostly they come back, they have to come back from there. After much penance, they climb up to that high mark, but they cannot accommodate that “the higher Entity must be dealt with devotion”, so they have to come back.

But those who realise: vasudevah sarvam iti, that Vasudeva – Purusottama – is personal, they can ‘cross the line’ and enter Vaikuntha, the service area proper.

And there, we are told, gradually as their vision grows more and more, they can find potency on the side of the personal God. Then they become the devotee of Laksmi-Narayana, and enter completely into Vaikuntha-seva. And in that service, we find awe, reverence; there are sastric (scriptural) rules, and also examples of the higher-realised souls, to guide them.

And in that Vaikuntha-seva, if the soul does not find the whole of his innate nature having full engagement, there will be some sort of thirst, some inner tendency which cannot find any corresponding relation to satisfy itself. And when he feels this kind of urge from within, he has to search after another rasa (a soul’s specific service mood/relationship with the Lord, and the ‘taste’ derived therefrom.), for a purer, more friendly service than the filial service (*dasya-rasa*).

And ultimately the madhura-rasa service – the sweetheart’s service, in consortherhood – urges him to go up. It urges him to go up, and to go deeper. And gradually, by coming in contact with such (*madhura rasa*) agents, he finds his

own heart blossoming. And blossoming to its fullest extent, his heart takes him gradually towards Goloka Vrindavana (the supreme spiritual planet, abode of Lord Krishna).....

Then he can see that what was (initially realised as) ‘brahma’; then Paramatma, or Vasudeva; then Laksmi-Narayana – that has gradually come to him as Krishna consciousness, not Narayana consciousness. Superceding Narayana consciousness, he comes in contact with Krishna consciousness of the Reality. He is awakened – he finds himself awakened in a plane where he see the all-connecting, all-harmonising principle is no longer Narayana, but Krishna – He is showing Himself as Krishna. Then he is fully awakened. His heart is fully awakened, and at the same time he sees that the environment, and the object of his search, is also fully equipped. This is full-fledged theism.

Full-fledged theism – where the theistic conviction receives its satisfaction in the fullest way. Just as, with the opening of the eye we can see the world, and according to the degree of our sight we come to see the subtlest thing of the environment, so also, by our inner awakenment of the fullest type, we come to a particular world, environment, and that is Vrindavana – Goloka Vrindavana, the land of love. And movement there is spontaneous; and all around, we find the environment only friendly. It is so simple, so friendly; and the dealing of all who are there are filled with so much intimacy.

And in Vrindavana we will find that our thirst for any higher change of environment, of association, no longer needs to be quenched; but there is thirst, eternal thirst, for coming in closer relation with them, closer connection with them. There is no possibility of any higher change of environment – where he has reached is almost final – and now the only remaining thing, is how to come into a more and more close connection with the environment. And that becomes the initiative of our movement there: more and more intimate connection with the environment. The environment is eternal, but in the intimacy of connection – the ‘competition’ (in loving service), the movement, is there. And the guidance is given according to that.

In this way, there is progress. There is some sort of ‘necessity’, by which the service is moving. And, there is repetition – a kind of ‘repetition’, but it is ever-fresh, ever-new! It is ever-new, and it is only a question of the time. For example, every day when I am hungry, in the morning, food is tasteful to me, and not always – by the movement of the time, it is like that. In this way,

everything is palatable, not stale. In that plane, there is movement of time, but it is eternal. It is managed by yogamaya (the internal potency of Lord Krishna, who arranges and conducts His lila) in such a way.

And finally, there we will attain the fullest satisfaction of all the inner parts of our system, the wholesale satisfaction of every atom of every constituent part of our spiritual body: priti anga lage kale, priti anga mora – “Every part of my every limb, cries for union with the corresponding part of every limb of the other side”. Sambandha – relationship with the environment – may come to such a stage, that every atom constituting my spiritual body and mind, will aspire after union with every corresponding part of the environment.

In this way, in such a friendly way, so many are moving there, and it is adjusted accordingly by yogamaya. And this is the highest conception.

Priti anga lage kale, priti anga mora – “Every atom of my existence is in loving aspiration with the environment, and that is Krishna. Krishna consciousness has surrounded me.” ‘Surrounded me’ means, “From all sides it has embraced me; I am lost in the thought of Krishna consciousness, with its detailed, elaborate acquaintance. I am merged, merged in the deepest part of Krishna consciousness, where I shall find “Krishna has captured every atom of my existence. Every atom is feeling as if it is experiencing separate pleasure by His embracing....” This is possible only in consortherhood relationship, where every atom has been embraced, captured, by coming into the most intimate connection with Him. It is called adi-rasa, or mukhya-rasa. The name of madhurya-rasa is adi-rasa, that is, it is the most original, it is the source of all other rasas, and all other rasas are dependent on it. So it is called ‘adi-rasa’. And, mukhya-rasa: the sum total of all ‘rasas’ – their gist, their essence, is represented there. We are told like that.

And Mahaprabhu came with this gift – madhurya-rasa. It is anarpita carim cirat, “that which was never distributed before” – that of which, it is considered, any distribution was not possible previously, before Him.

In Bhaktivinod Thakur’s book Jaiva Dharma, we find that one Vaisnava is asking his Gurudeva, “Devotion, it is eternal; but why do you say that it came from Mahaprabhu?” Then his Guru, Paramahansa Babaji, is saying, “I visited Vrindavana and asked the eternal servitor of Sri Caitanyadeva, Sanatana Goswami: “This anarpita carim cirat – “which has never been dealt with before” – what is the meaning underlying it?” Then Sanatana Goswami replied: “Bhakti is eternal; in ‘Narada-bhakti-sutra’, ‘Sandilya-sutra’, all such scriptures, this has

been given – but the type of devotion which Mahaprabhu came with, which we meet after the advent of Mahaprabhu Sri Caitanyadeva, that was not previously at any time open to the ordinary person. So, it is called ‘anarpita carim’. And what is that standard of devotion? It is this: complete surrender to Krishna in consortherhood, where every atom of the jiva-soul gets welcomed and embraced by the corresponding atom of Krishna consciousness – madhura-rasa. That was not open to the public before. This is my finding, my faith. You may accept, or not accept ...” Sanatana Goswami told like this to that Vaisnava: “This is my private conception – you may take it, or not”. This was his reply.

So devotion has its beginning; the beginning of devotional life is here, where Krishna says ‘*vasudevah sarvam iti ....*’ (Bhagavad-gita 7.19) (“I, Vasudeva, am the source and substance of all that be”). Then, the beginning of bhakti, the primary admission into the devotional school above ‘jnana’ – knowledge - and *vairagya* – renunciation, that is santa-rasa (‘passive’ relationship with the Lord.) And from there the gradation: *dasya-rasa* (servitude); then sakhya-rasa (fraternity); then *vatsalya-rasa* (parenthood); then *madhura-rasa* (conjugal). All this is given in details in ‘ramananda-samvada’.

In this way, bhakti is going up. Systematically, we are to understand, and digest, digest what is ‘bhakti’. But, in the beginning, we are to have a broad conception of the positive world, the world of dedication.

## **The presence of the Lord**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** In the beginning, when I went to the Gaudiya Math, the murti – the Deity of Mahaprabhu – was there in another room. I asked, “this murti is made of what substance, earth or wood?” The devotee attending the Deity told me, “He is Mahaprabhu Himself. Do not try to see wood, earth or anything else. Mahaprabhu Himself is present there.”

So I, questioned them further, “If Mahaprabhu Himself is there, then why is your Guru Maharaja – who is the greatest devotee – upstairs in another room?”

If Mahaprabhu Himself would have been present here, then whoever is the highest devotee amongst you should have stayed at His side. But he is staying upstairs in another room and Mahaprabhu is placed in a separate room near the street where everyone can see Him easily. Why your Guru Maharaja is not here by His side if He is Mahaprabhu Himself?”

They replied, “He is also at the side of Mahaprabhu in his heart.” That is the higher conception, a more real conception of Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu’s presence is here and also in his heart. This is a higher conception of Mahaprabhu than the Deity conception. He is always enjoying the presence of Mahaprabhu in his heart. Such a devotee is of a higher type.

So, Krsna Consciousness, God Consciousness is like that. It is cin-maya – it is conscious and spiritual. The Lord has manifested Himself in this mundane plane of our sense experience for our benefit. He is not to be neglected. However, this conception, this presence of His grace, is considered to be for the lower section. Yet the Deity should not be considered as an idol. The Deity is also His presence manifested for our gross senses. However, a devotee always sees all things connected to the Lord, the Centre.

*arcayam eva haraye, pujam yah sraddhayehate  
na tad-bhaktesu canyesu, sa bhaktah prakrtah smrtah*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.47)

“When we do not learn to appreciate the presence of the Lord in the heart of His devotees, but only confine ourselves to such symbols connected with Him, our standard of devotion is meagre.”

We cannot eliminate the plane of affection and love that we find here and there scattered in different ways. We are to trace the causal existence of everything. What is the unity in the background that is really harmonizing all these scattered experiences? One whose consciousness is raised to such a standard can see the background of everything as one, from one centre. All these creations are handled, controlled and managed from one centre. “Wherever he goes, he is always with My connection. I am not lost to him.” In Srimad Bhagavatam it is said:

*sarva-bhutesu yah pasyed, bhagavad-bhavam atmanah  
bhutani bhagavaty atmany, esa bhagavatottamah*

(Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.45)

“One who can see everywhere the connection of the Centre in the background, sees all things correctly. He sees the cause, the connection, the central position, the background, and also his own relationship to the whole in that position.”

In any particular experience, there are three things: The deepest root (Sri Krsna), the seer's connection (Sri Guru), and that which is having the experience of his connection (jivatma). This is in accordance to his position with the Centre and it is also interdependent on his adjustment with that environment. That adjustment is concomitant with his relationship to the Centre. Everything will be considered in relation to the position and desires of the Centre, and not any independent transaction with part and part. It is from the part to the Whole, and from the Whole to the part.

‘What will be my position, my relationship to this part?’ It must be calculated through the Centre, and that will be real. This relationship of, “I and he,” is considered a misconception. This misconception will not remain, as it is unreal. But if it comes through the Centre, then it will be real and we will not be frustrated or disappointed. This sort of measurement or estimation would be one of substance. The part-to-part relationship is unstable. It is truly unreliable and will not remain. However, the connection that comes through the Centre is substantial, real and will not frustrate us.

Philosophy in India means darsana – allow me to see, allow me to experience things – What is what? Our superficial estimation is not the whole conception. We should learn to see things and to know things properly. This is sambandha-jnana. What is our position in the environment? Is the environment real? Why? Is it only our eye experience, ear experience or, something more is in the background – behind everything? How can that be understood – only by our reason? ..... Never!

Applying our reason to understand the Infinite is futile. Then, how can He be known? The Infinite is not – cannot be by definition – the object of our experience, our inspection. He is far above that. He has got His own responsibility to make known to us His position as the controller of the whole. He sends His agents and His announcements to make us understand that our creation, our sustenance and our destruction is being controlled by Him. We shall try to meet with Him and attain some understanding with that superior

power about our own goal of life. Athato brahma jijnasa.

Inquire about the place where you are living. This inquiry must be extensive – not superficial. It should be real. Wherever you are, inquire into your environment, not superficially, but with real attention to understand where you are and who you are. Who is above you? Who is lower than you? Study all these things. This will really be beneficial to your own interest. Otherwise, all your attempts will be useless and perishable. Your treachery is to your own self. The way you are living, that is a treacherous life – towards your own self. Therefore, try to understand things clearly, what is what and then live accordingly.

Ordinary persons cannot give up their livelihood – their everyday duties and necessities – so they miss the association of the higher agents in their daily activities. In daily life, so many duties must be discharged, so many necessities are there for us to procure and so, that is mixed – not unalloyed. Therefore, “Give up these duties and make exclusive inquiry about the environment and its relationship to one’s self. This is jnana.”

In the third plane, the practical life in connection with that Infinite is possible. In connection with the Infinite, there is also such a life – so many duties – and that is mixed with the central interest – the deepest interest. Jnana-sunya-bhakti means, “Pursuance and maintenance of duties connecting us with the Centre.”

This is in the eternal position. No death can remove us from there because that is in connection with the Centre. When we are doing some duty, no death can challenge that eternal conduct. In other words, there is the plane of service, and the plane of exploitation, or enjoyment. In the middle is the plane of renunciation, the abscissa – no man’s land – the border of the two planes, brahman and viraja.

We are to study these details. There are five stages: The stage of inquiry, the stage of admission, the stage of temporary duty, the stage of being established in one’s own post of service and then the stage of being harmonized totally with the Centre. These five stages are again subdivided. They pass through such inquiry in eternal life: sraddha (faith), our association with those who are expert in that plane, sadhu-sanga; whatever duties are recommended by Him we are to go on doing, bhajana-kriya; the undesirable things are eliminated wholly, anartha-nivrtti; we get our continued position in divine life.

We then experience the real worth and attraction for that sort of spiritual life,

then so many symptoms of divine life descend in our own existence. Gradually, we shall merge into the interest of God and find our true self there in His relationship. Faith is so real that Christ left this life, finished this life playfully, totally forgetful of the interests of this life. Socrates also gave his life for faith. So, faith is something much more substantial than our fleeting desires in the lower life. We are running towards plurality. So many separate interests, many thousands of things are not necessary. Therefore engage your self with the One, connect yourself with the One Centre. Thereafter no more running hither and thither to connect with the unwholesome appeal of this world. The One is sufficient. Connect with the One Centre. Try to find the Centre of all-Knowledge.

When we understand the particular laws of mathematics, then so many sums are automatically done. So, if we get the law – the basic formula in our own hands – then, we have got everything. What is apparently impossible becomes possible. We are to connect ourselves with this sort of understanding – this is the domain of faith proper. When we connect with the All-Controlling Central Point, then we shall be able to know everything that is necessary. If we go to the higher office, then from there we can gather everything about the branch offices. So, inquire about that substance. If we get information from the Centre, then we have information from all the different sub-offices and branches.

All the branches are “controlled” by the All-Controlling Centre. Therefore, we are to connect ourselves with that Centre. We have this necessity: “By knowing Him, we can know everything; by obtaining Him, we can obtain everything.” We will go directly to the Centre. This is the direction – the path to trod – and it is possible. He who thinks it is possible and engages himself in this pursuit – he is sraddhavan. Such a devotee has got sound faith, sraddha. Then his inquisitiveness (of the intellect) is satisfied. The whole substantial, practical life he will also find fully present there; it is not imagination.

Mahaprabhu came to give not only theoretical solution, but to help your whole practical life which will also be benefited by knowing, inquiring and understanding this eternal Truth. Your practical life at every point will find its fullest satisfaction – if you inquire on the basis of this background. You will be benefited in every detail of your life’s necessity. All your practical necessities that you are not conscious of at present – all will find their fullest satisfaction there. You will have engagement, and you will feel that you are deriving more satisfaction than you could have ever imagined. All your attempts are procuring

fulfilment in that plane.

*ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-mahadavagni-nirvapanam  
sreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranam vidyavadhu-jivanam  
anandambudhi-varadhanam prati-padam purnamrtasvadanam  
sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam*  
(Sri Siksastakam,1)

“You will obtain your fullest satisfaction beyond your most satiated imagination. You will feel not only in connection with an ocean of joy, but at every step, you will find full enjoyment that is ever new. You will have to experience new fulfilment of life at every moment. Every moment is new fulfilment beyond your estimation and by that fulfilment – by that satisfaction, you will not be the loser. You will not be responsible for any reaction. You will feel you are being purified at every moment. By enjoyment here, you are impure with reaction. But in that process in connection with the Infinite, whatever satisfaction or enjoyment you will experience even though new at every step, will not draw any reaction. You will feel wholesale purification when you do that, you will feel the ecstasy which is drawn only by your dedication.”

Dedication, ecstasy, satisfaction in your search – these things will give you joy – but that joy will not mix with dirt: it will only purify you. Whatever you learn will only be purifying. It is so novel because the basis is dedication – not exploitation. Cultivation of Krsna Consciousness in its highest stage is such: the more you enjoy, the more you are purified. Such a program Mahaprabhu has recommended to us from Srimad Bhagavatam, the last projection of revealed Truth from that great expounder, Sri Vedavyasa.

**The quality of our inner hankering is all in all**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The path must always be of submission and humility, sincere search and the service of the Vaisnava and Guru, in the service of Krsna conception, Krsna consciousness. But that is not a pure chaotic thing, it has got

some real nature. The encasement, the outer garment, the covers should be eliminated, and the essence should be taken; this should be accepted.

So we are to indirectly have some consciousness: what is *anyabhilasa*, what is karma, what is *jnana*, what is yoga - some sort of knowledge, indirect knowledge of those things that are not Krsna conscious.

What is anti-Krsna consciousness, some knowledge for that, but our main knowledge is to be for the substance and some knowledge for the cover. If we are sincere in our search then none can seduce us. Our Chaitya Guru, our Inner Guide will help us always. We shall ask within, "My Lord, I am at the crossroad, which way to select." The inner voice will help you, 'if you want your benefit, go this side, don't be opportunist.' Try to listen to that inner voice as much as possible for you. Beyond that there is no help. I can't go, but He can come. He can come to my position to help me, but I can't go beyond my limit. So my prayer is my everything. Gaur Hari bol. We shall pray that the inner voice will guide us sincerely, properly - especially in times of crisis, no other way for us; we are not omniscient; we are not absolute - all powerful. What more can we do, we must be sincere to our own. That is our ultimate benefit. Gaur Hari bol.

**Devotee:** How can we recognize the difference between the inner voice as you say and the so many other voices that are proposing that we enjoy maya, that we go here and there, so many voices internally.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** As much as I have come to understand so much responsibility to me, but what I do not know, I may not have any responsibility to that. But according to my own knowledge and experience, Krsna says that if one prays to Me and due to his ignorance prays for something that is not beneficial for him, so ignorance is no bar to the realization of Krsna. He is too clever. But our inner hankering, the quality of our inner hankering, that will be all in all.

An ignorant man may be directed properly and a scholarly man may not have any real direction. That quality of sincerity is dependent on the sukrti - the quality of the sukrti that I have acquired from the previous Vaisnavas in my previous births. The quality of the sukrti, that will guide us, generally it is seen, sukrti. Three kinds of dealings we find in the phase of the liberation, or our achievement about Krsna. General case is: "whoever approaches Me and in what spirit, My reaction for him will be accordingly. If he approaches Me in a

challenging mood, I will also approach him in a challenging mood - with the demons. By the simple way, I also deal in a simple way.

How anyone, because he is free, I am free and the free man's approach, according to his approach I can do it; that is the general case. It is a two-sided issue. Sometimes one formally asks My devotion, but I give them mukti, because I can see the innermost quarter, but there something else. But anyhow ostentatiously, he is praying, praying devotion, My favour, but I can also detect and I give him salvation. And there is also another issue, he is very sincere at heart, but he has got no regulated way of prayer; does not know formally how to put the petition to Me.

In that case I overlook his superficial fault and correct it and say, 'You have prayed this thing, but I think you want this thing, is it not? And if you correct it and pray for this thing, I will give you that.'" These three corresponding dealing, we find about Him in the scriptures, and we like to adjust with that in such a way. Three types of dealing, one general and two particular. The uneducated priest does not know so much, he will make mistakes. And the scholar, he will correctly pronounce the sloka. But Janardan, He will accept the thing according to his heart's nature, not the word. In Bhagavatam it is said, in the ten outlines, points, Narada giving to Vyasadev.

*tad-vag-visargo janatagha-viplavo yasmin prati-slokam abaddhavyaty api  
namany anantasya yaso 'nikitani yat srnvanti gayanti grnanti sadhavaḥ*  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.11)

The grammatical mistakes and other such ornamental mistakes are overlooked by the Lord. He reads the heart; the language of heart is all in all. The sin will be removed, washed away by those words, which may be full of grammatical mistakes, but surcharged with the real spirit of devotion. On the other hand this, the style, the language, everything is very beautifully, but if you dive deep, you will find no mention of the glory of the Lord, he is putting rather himself in the middle, but ornamental language, all these things, but it is lifeless.

So Narada, Vyasadeva, whatever it will be, the substance must be Krsna. You must be very careful to that; then it is alright. The outward, that is nothing, misguiding; the heart, not the brain, but the heart. Heart is accepted in the gopis' case. Are they very scholarly? They reject knowledge - jnana-sunya bhakti . Mahaprabhu has said, just as ignorance is an enemy, so 'I know' is also an

enemy. In the case what is unintelligible is not within your scope of understanding. Where you cannot be the subject and make it object of your subjective calculation, so in that case your knowing has no meaning. 'I know' has got no meaning, because its very existence is superseding your subjective area of knowledge. So, knowledge has got no meaning there, but your sraddha can go just as an x-ray can pierce through the wall to reveal. So sraddha, the faith, can go through the walls of variegated nature.

However hard they make it, the faith can pierce through, but knowledge cannot. Light has got its limit just like touch has got its limit. Which is not within my reach I cannot touch, I cannot get that experience, but my eye has got more range, but eye has also got limit, where my intelligence can go. And also intelligence cannot go, but faith can go, it is not non-scientific, the jurisdiction of faith may take us to that plane, but intelligence fails, our knowledge, our experience fails to give any photo, to give any conception of that world, they cannot catch beyond their jurisdiction.

So faith is the only reliable, heart's expansion. Heart's prospect has the highest range, jurisdiction, but not our reason. Reason fails to reach, to calculate. No! Reason itself will say this is impossible, but heart can accommodate. The heart is the most accommodating, the faith most accommodating. Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna.

**Devotee:** Maharaj, is faith a constant thing, or sometimes our faith is weak and sometimes it is strong?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Maybe the covers are there sometimes, just as we see in a tank so many plants floating on the water. What is that? The plants floating on the water, sometimes it seems the water is closed, not moving. In this way sraddha is closed by anyabhilasa, karma, jnana, it may cover, we are detached. Everywhere, that is, the faith is everywhere in svarupa, innate nature. In the womb, when the child is in the womb of the mother, in the embryo the heart is there, faith is there, with favorable environment it grows gradually, and by unfavorable environment it will be lost to its minutest degree, suppressed. Gaur Hari bol, Gaur Hari bol.

## The Real Name, Shadow and Offense

**Devotee:** What can help an intellectual to develop sastric vision?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The other, internal aspect must be awakened, and then intellectualism will vanish. The intellectual cover will vanish automatically. Intellectualism cannot be utilized, but that causeless, eternal wealth within, that must be awakened. Karma-jnana (fruitive work & intellectualism), they are foreign things, foreign covers.

*vasudeve bhagavati bhakti-yoga prayojitah*

If somehow, with the help of the scriptures and the devotee, His agent, we can develop our devotion, bhakti, then, the proper knowledge, and proper very indifference towards the worldly things will follow. Healthy knowledge, proper knowledge, and healthy energy will follow if the real thing within us awakens. We must be adjusted with that, not this mundane knowledge or energy – that is something else. Energy, the capacity to work, to move, and knowledge, the proper conception; that will be the result of our devotion. Sambandha-jnana, or to know what is what.

A new world will awaken within us; we will know what is what. Misconception will evaporate, will retire, and the proper conception will evolve from within us – sambhanda-jnana. “I am such-and-such to my Lord – to the Lord’s friends, and to my Lord’s lovers.” We will know all these things; and what sort of knowledge – what sort of movement should be ours in this environment, new environment. In this way, readjustment will come from within. This will have to retire, this knowledge and this sort of energizing will retire; will have to fade away, like darkness.

Misconceptions may be utilized only when the proper conception has come, when the professor will say, “In this way you are misconceiving things. Your proper conception is this; but did you misconceive this thing and that?” “Yes sir, I thought like that. Now, I see the real thing is this. This is not mine, what to speak of mine, I also belong to Krsna, my Lord. I am monarch of all I survey, or everything is enemy to me, apathetic to me. I awoke one morning, and found He was famous. My overlording mentality was wholesale gone, that everything

belongs to me. I am not master, rather I am a slave, I do not hold the position of a master, what to speak of having, or possessing so many properties. Even I am a property to another Possessor.” And the calculation must begin from that plane, and a new land will be found.

I do not belong to me; what to speak of the world belonging to me. That aspiration, and that sort of aggression, “I shall conquer the whole world by the atomic energy.” Such a false notion of the suffering human intellect, thinking that he is holding the highest position, challenging God, “God is only a myth, only an imaginary thing.” From that we need a wholesale, radical cure. I do not belong to myself; I have my eternal master.”

But they will say, “This is slave mentality. Gaudiya Math is spreading slave mentality in our country; this is most objectionable. This will destroy the military spirit of the land. So, you can’t be encouraged to spread slavery. That they are nothing, they do belong to Him, the country does not belong to us, no interest, eh! What are they? Go, hence, and live in the Vaikuntha. We won’t allow you to spread this poison into the country.” What shall we say?

We may come down to Bhagavad-gita Krsna supported war, but not from this stand-point.

*yada yada he dharmasya glanir bhavati bharata  
abhyuthanam adharmasya tadatmanam srijamy aham*  
(Bhagavad-gita 4.7)

“Sometimes, the world is so powerfully attacked by the atheistic influence, that I have to come down again to re-establish some sort of religious environment here. And the dreaded enemies are killed, and the good thinkers are given certain relief in their lives. For this I have to come.”

**Devotee:** About two weeks ago, a young 10-year-old boy that I knew was killed in an accident. And he shouted, “Krsna, Krsna.” Someone so young, what will be his destination?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Young or old, in the plane of flesh and blood, that is no qualification. The mentality is to be examined. In a particular place we may have some namabhasa. When Gnadhi was shot twice in the chest, from a few yards away, he cried out, “Ha Rama, Ha Rama, Ha Rama.” And he fell, his spectacles were thrown, and within half an hour he had to pass away. But he pronounced

“Ha Rama, ha Rama.” He was going to deliver a religious lecture, but his mentality was full of this national progress. It will work in that plane, on behalf of that nation building.

What was this boy’s mentality? Sometimes namabhasa may come, not sudha-nama. A peculiar particular case it is possible. It depends on the mental system, the external acquaintance, and the inner awakening; what is its relation to Krsna. Before his sannyas, one day when Mahaprabhu was chanting, “Gopi, Gopi, Gopi,” taking the name and one tantric came to give some advice to Him: “Pandita! You scholar, you know the sastra. You were chanting ‘Gopi, Gopi,’ what is the good effect of that? You should chant Krsna-nama. It is mentioned in the sastra, that if you chant the name of Krsna you may get some benefit; we find this in the sastra, many Puranas. But why do you chant, ‘Gopi, Gopi’?”

Mahaprabhu collected a rod and began to attack him: “You fellow, you are coming from the opposite camp. You come to convert the followers of Krsna?” He ran to beat him, to give him a good beating. He fled, and then began a conspiracy in order to give a good fight to Mahaprabhu.

“He may be a child of the noble family, but we are not less. We do not hold a lesser position than He. We are also coming from a good society, and a good family ... And He will come to punish us? To beat us? We shall also see how to beat Him.”

Then Mahaprabhu took another course, “*korila pippalikhanda kapha nibarite ulatiya aro kapha badila dehete*” “Oh, I came to make a drastic treatment of the cold, but I see that what I came to give, that has an opposite reaction. The highest type of medicine I administered, but I find that the patient is such, that this is increasing his disease. Then what to do?”

“I came to work-out relief for the people, and the people they are standing against Me, the well-wisher, the relief giver. Then, what may be the remedy for them?”

Then, He took another course. “I shall become sannyasi. They think that I am one of them. They have come from a respectable family, I am also coming from a respectable family, as if I am one of them. But I must have to take another chance to help them.” So, he went to take sannyasa. He was taking the name of “Gopi, Gopi,” and neglecting Krsna. When He was advised to chant the name of Krsna, He was enraged. What is the underlying thought here? “Krsna, Krsna,” we may chant the name, but the underlying, background purpose, should be

judged. But still there may be some effect sometimes, not always.

*damstridamstrahato mleccha ha rameti punah punah  
uktvapi muktim apnoti kim punah sraddhaya grnan*

A hog is attacking a Muhammadan, and the Muhammadan shouts out, “Ha rama, ha rama!” Ha rama means, “Oh weh! That is a hog coming to attack me.” But anyhow, that Rama came to him, and it had some influence. It is possible. Valmiki said, “ma-ra, ma-ra,” he could not pronounce the name of Rama in a direct way. Brahma and Narada came to prove the efficacy of Rama-nama. It is mentioned in the sastra,

*rama rameti rameti rame rame manorame  
sahasra-nama-bhistallyam rama-nama-varanane*

A thousandfold result we can find from Rama-nama. “This Ratnakar Dasu, he is the most notorious type of dacoit, a heinous person, let us make an experiment with him.” So they asked him to chant the name of Rama. They tried, but he could not pronounce it. Then they said, “Chant ma-ra, ma-ra. Go on, repeat it.” And he started, “ma-ra ma-ra-ma-ra-ma-ra-ma-ra-ma-ra. This is just the opposite of Rama. Then, after some time chant the name of Rama.” Then he could say Rama, Rama.

In this way, the mental plane, the attitude with which we are to accept, and the latitude we can conceive, the quality we can conceive depends on that. Because, it is vaikuntha-nama, nama is infinite and the nama is equal to the person whose name it is. The sound aspect, is one and the same with the original aspect of the thing – that is vaikuntha-nama. Here in this world, a man may be blind, but his name may be Padma-lochan, lotus-eyed. But really he is blind. The name and the figure they may be different. But in Vaikuntha, in the infinite world it is one and the same.

Nama-aparadha is there; namabhasa is there. By namabhasa we can get some relief from this worldly bondage; and by nama-aparadha we may be more entangled in this mayic world. Namakshara-bahiraya this physical sound, cannot represent the real name which is supernatural, that is, its own aspect.

*eka krsna-name jata papa hari  
pataki sadhya nai tata papa kori*

One name of Krsna can remove so much ignorance, that a man has got no power to commit so much sin. But what is that name? We are taking that name so many times, but we do not get the result of even one name.

So, this ordinary name, this superficial, this mayic name and that name has got great difference. That name is one and the same with Him, and that comes down to our level. We cannot chant it by dint of our tongue or lip. Not lip-deep, but heart deep. And beyond heart also it reaches to the land of Krsna. Krsna comes here; the name Krsna, He comes through the heart on the tongue – that is Krsna-nama.

Krsna, in the form of sound, he is coming down from the transcendental world into my heart, and from my heart, controlling all my nervous system, he is coming to the lip and dancing here. That is Krsna-nama; the initiative is in the transcendental world, and not produced from the physical plane. Spiritual sound has to, reality has to come down to this plane. He can come down, but we cannot go up there easily. He is super-subject, and we are object to Him. So, we cannot interfere with His independence; only by the negative, by our attraction, by our surrender we can attract Him to come down to our level.

*atah sri krsna-namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyai  
sevonmukhe hi jivadau svayam eva spurathy adah*

“It is not a production of our senses. When we are with a very intense serving attitude, he Himself comes down attracted by our serving nature, which is out of His grace.” And then He can influence this element and produce sound, and there is dancing there. That is the vaikuntha-nama, real name.

We cannot produce it. Our sound of our production, physical or mental production, that is not He. He is separate, and He can come everywhere, in any form, in any plane, controlling them.

*prakrtim svam adhithaya sambhavamy atma-mayaya*  
(Bhagavad-gita 4.6)

“When I come here, by the force of My internal potency, I remove this external potency’s influence, and appear anywhere and everywhere. The external energy is forced back.”

When the plane is flaying over in the sky, it removes the air, wind, and forcibly passes. So, by removing this influence of the material things, He has to come

with His own force here, to appear. “I have got my own potency, and by the power of that potency, I remove this gross potency here, and live and move here, and act here.” The law of this nature cannot apply to Him. He has got special power, with the help of that He subdues the law of this nature, and he comes here and there, whatever He does – with His own potency. Wherever He goes, the laws of nature withdraw from that place, and give Him way.

## **The Spiritual Master and the Disciple**

One should approach the spiritual Master for general guidance, to get the proper standpoint in life. That is the most important thing we can get from guru. The standpoint we get from our ordinary lives may come from anywhere and everywhere, but that may mislead us and misguide us. So we must be very particular about getting the proper direction. That direction is given in Bhagavad-Gita: tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya.

The Lord has given us this general guidance of where we should try to get the standpoint or measure through which we are to understand. The standard by which we come to measure truth, untruth or anything must come from a real plane, not a vitiated plane, an ordinary plane or vulnerable plane. It must come from that plane which has two qualifications: jnani and tattva darsi, the conception of the thing and also the practical benefit. The proper standard will allow me to measure what is right and what is wrong. Also the qualification of the seeker of truth is given. His attitude must be of this type pranipat, pariprasna and seva. Pranipat means surrender to such knowledge.

The knowledge we are approaching is not an ordinary class of knowledge. It is a subject which we cannot make an object to our subjective self. We must understand it to be a super-subjective thing, which is superior to me. So pranipat means I must surrender to that superior thing. I want Him, He is not an objective thing which I can make an object with myself as subject. This sort of attitude must be there. Pranipat also means that I have finished my interest in the outside world of experience. I have no charm for anything in the world where I have

already travelled. I am offering myself exclusively at Your altar and I want to have Your grace. In such a mood we shall approach the higher knowledge.

Then pariprasna, honest inquiry is always allowed, but not with any tendency for discussion or in the way of argument. All efforts should be concentrated in a positive line, leaving aside the state of doubt and suspicion. With all attention we shall try to understand because it is coming from a higher plane with which I am unfamiliar and which is ever new.

### Bottle And The Bee

But the most important thing is seva. Not that I am going to get knowledge, that I shall get the help of that plane and use it for the persons living here. Higher knowledge won't come to serve the interests of the lower plane but I must pledge to serve that plane. With this attitude I shall approach that plane and that knowledge. I shall serve Him and I won't try to make Him serve me or my lower plane. That idea won't allow me to enter that domain. Rather, I shall have the fullest tendency that if I get that knowledge I must serve. I must offer myself to be utilized by Him, and I shall not try to utilize it in my way, to satisfy my lower animal purposes.

With seva vritti. I shall seek the plane of real knowledge, to have the standard from there of what is to be understood and to have a proper estimation of the environment we are in. Pranipatena, pariprasnena sevaya – this is Vedic culture. It is always imparted by this submissive process and never by intellectual approach. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Prabhupada used to give this analogy. The honey is in a bottle and a bee is sitting on the glass and trying to lick the bottle. Some foolish person may say the bee is licking the honey. In the same way the intellect cannot approach spirit. I may think that I have got that by such approach. But is it possible?

A barrier is there, like a glass barrier. So intellectual understanding is not real achievement of the higher knowledge or higher plane. Only through faith, sincerity and dedication can we approach to be a member of that higher plane. Only if we are admitted, if we get the visa, then we can enter that country, the plane of higher, divine living. So the candidate shall approach with these three qualifications: pranipat, praiprasna and seva. Then he can approach the truth which is the higher plane of reality. It is always found in the Gita that we should approach with this sort of attitude of humility, sincerity and dedication.

## No Other Way

In Bhagavatam a particular passage is given: sabde pare ca nisnatam brahmany upasamasrayam. In the Veda and Upanishad also we find strotiriyum brahmanistham guru evabhigacchet. Guru eva means that we must certainly approach the spiritual master. Abhigacchet means that the approach should not be haphazard or hesitatingly. One should go with a clear and honest, full heart. Our Gurudeva used to say, “You have not come here cutting any return ticket.”

I have seen, I have got full experience of this mortal world. I have nothing to aspire after here. One must have this clear consciousness that there is no other way to live. No one can live in the mortal plane whereas the innate tendency everywhere is to live. There is no means to lie here, but I only want to live, to save myself. So I am running to take real shelter, and this is my earnest desire and utmost necessity. Samitpani means that the necessary materials will be taken by the disciple. He won't go to trouble his own guru. With his own bed, baggage and everything he requires he will go to the spiritual master, not to show some kindness to him, that I have come to give you some name and fame, etc.

## Qualification of Guru

And what will be the position of guru? Srotriyum brahmanistham. Srotriyum means that he will be well-versed in the sruti sastra. This is not ordinary knowledge but revealed truth. Revelation in many shades has been spread throughout the world from the higher plane. Guru must have some spacious, graphic and extensive knowledge about revealed truth. And he should already be practicing the real life. Sabde para ca nisnatam means that one should be well-versed in revealed truth, sabde sastra, or sruti sastra.

Not only the precepts of the revealed scriptures, but one should be in contact with and conversant with the very object of the scriptures. One should approach an experienced person who is established in that plane of consciousness if he wants to get relief and to understand what is the highest benefit in the world and how to attain it. His activities are all with Brahman, not with the material world. Brahman is the plane which can accommodate everything. It is the most fundamental, Vyoma or basis of everything. Guru is always leading his life in relation with that plane and not with any mortal mundane reference. He is always doing everything in connection with that plane. Whatever he does is only in that consciousness. That is brahmanistham.

## Highest Good

Tasmad gurur prapadyeta jijnasa sreya uttamam. Everything around me is mortal. It will all vanish, and it is all a source of deception. We are living in the midst of misconception (maya). Whatever conception we have got about the environment is based on misconception of things in the absolute sense. All our conceptions are relative since it is only our provincial selfishness which has been imposed on the environment and we are living under that. Within such circumstances we shall feel the necessity of approaching guru, the guide or preceptor, with the purpose of inquiry (jijnasa). And what is our inquiry? Sreya uttamam. What is the highest good for us? We shall approach the guide with this inquiry.

## Fossil Fatherism

These things are necessary. We are approaching something real. It is not imaginary only. It must be sought in a real way, and that may be difficult. But we must face that, otherwise we shall go in a wrong way and then we will say, "Oh, there is nothing." That will not happen if we go according to the real process. Then we must come to have experience of the divinity. Scientists think that the subtle aspect of nature is coming from the gross. But their idea is upside down. We must realize that everything is coming from the higher to the lower, form up to down. It is not fossil fatherism but soul or God fatherism.

The scientists say everything is upward moving, but it is just the reverse. Everything is coming down. In Bhagavad-Gita it is mentioned urdhva mulam adhahsakham. One who knows the real purport of the Vedas is one who can understand that the material conception is upside down. One who can understand this has got some conception of the Vedic knowledge. Matter does not produce soul. It is rather that the soul contains within its negligent portion the conception of matter. This world exists like an eczema or a disease in a wholesome body. This is the Vedantic vicara (understanding). So we must observe everything with this attitude, that everything is coming from up to down. In this way we must approach knowledge with a submissive attitude and then we will understand everything in truth.

## **The standard comes from outside**

**Devotee:** How will a person be able to read the universal wave when his mind is fully engrossed with local interest of different kinds? How can one detect the universal interest – the universal wave?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Only one who has fully eliminated all kinds of local interest and is eager to understand the universal wave, he can see it clearly. Athesv abhijnah svarat: what is the purpose of the movement of this world? The answer is clear - it is “For Itself”. Reality is for itself - not to satisfy many but to satisfy One.

All the waves are meant to satisfy that One, and if we can put ourselves on that level we can understand the Truth; otherwise not - in which case, we engage in thievery. We are far from the Truth when we cannot see that everything - all waves are flowing towards the satisfaction of the One - *svayam-bhagavan*. We are labouring under a deception, we are deceivers who are not just deceiving ourselves but the world as well. Everyone – all the *baddha-jivas* are more or less cheaters.

That is our position and we must be relieved of such misunderstanding, self-deception and environmental cheating if we are to be placed in our proper position.

Thereafter we may go there and find that universal wave - actually see it - have darshan. Darshan means ‘to see’; but how to see? That must be learned. What to see? How to read what is going on within myself and outside myself? That is proper understanding - proper education. A proper understanding of one’s own self as well as the environment is proper education. That education must be Vedic. The standard must be drawn from outside this area of maya - this area of misunderstanding; the standard must be drawn from the perfect realm through Veda - revealed Truth.

We must accept revealed Truth and bid farewell to so-called scientific knowledge and other kinds of perceptions that are all erroneous - based on false experience and false information. “It belongs to me; it belongs to him; it belongs to them.” This calculation is all false. We have to get wholesale relief from this

mania!

And what's more, we must not only get relief from this misconception, from misunderstanding the external waves, but we must attain a positive position - to learn to understand the wave, the vibration of Goloka. Goloka is the most universal, most fundamental plane. If we can harmonize ourselves with that plane, we will be led to Vrndavana or Nabadwipa and there, we shall see things as they are.

## **The Wave of Love**

*tat te' nukampam susamiksamano  
bhunjana evathma-krtam vipakam  
hrd-vag-vapurahir vidhdhan namas te  
jiveta yo mukti-pade sa daya-bhak  
(Bhagavatam, 10.14.8)*

With the help of the Guru, the Scriptures, and the previous experienced persons, I shall try to stand the test, that "Yes, because the bile is so, everything is tasting bitter. But this process will remove the bile. I shall have to wait for some time, and when the bile is gone, I shall taste sugar candy as sweet."

When normal, I will be able to feel that so many sweet waves are coming from all around to me. Maya santusta manasah, sarvvah sukhamaya disah (Bhagavatam, 11.14.12) "For one who is satisfied with Me, then all the directions, all the four directions will bring only good news to him." All waves will carry only welfare to that person who is satisfied with God only and nothing else. "I want God, and His interests are my interest. He is the loving father, guardian, or friend of everyone."

Now we are distracted and have many different interests, but if we can put God's interest in the centre, then we shall be able to find, to read, that from all directions only good news is coming to me – no bad or unfavourable news. All

favourable news will come to me if I can be on that level, that plane, if my ego can take a stand there. In that universal wave, every vibration will only carry favourable news to me. *Maya santusta manasah*, “He who is satisfied with Me alone, *sarvah sukhamaaya disah*, he will see that all the directions are only carrying happy news to him, cent-per-cent good news”. So a readjustment is necessary, and religion means proper adjustment. We are now incorrectly adjusted and are concerned with different types of separate interests; that is the difficulty. We have to change and find out the universal interest. That universal wave is the most fundamental current.

*Sa vai pumsam paro dharmo*: The highest type of duty for everyone is yato bhaktir adhoksaje, that your attention, your submission will go to Adhoksaja, that unknown universal guardian. Ahaituky-apratihata: this submission is causeless and can never be opposed. The original vibration is forever existing. It is self-existent: none can have created that. It is eternally continuing. and none can oppose it – that wave is irresistible. Try to identify your interest with that wave. That is *bhakti*, bhakti proper. This is the definition of bhakti: sa vai pumsam paro dharmmo; the highest duty of everyone, every soul, is this. That bhakti is adhoksaja. Your attention, your interest should be diverted towards the infinite, to the unknown, to the unknown quarter, up to the Nth degree. The mathematicians speak of calculating, continuing to the Nth degree. But this is beyond the Nth degree. Yato bhaktir adhoksaje. What are its qualities? Ahaituki and apratihata. Ahaituki: No hetu, no cause; it is causeless. And that is eternal, apratihata; it can never be stopped. None can oppose it; none can give any hindrance to it. It is so forceful and continuous, forcefully continuous, that none can stop it.

Such is the original vibration, and that is all sweet, all-accommodating, and all-embracing. So this is the advice of Bhagavatam and Mahaprabhu, and there we will find the wave of love, prema. This is most accommodating – comprehensive. And fulfillment is given in that way: bhakti, prema-bhakti – love. Without love, none can be, none can hold a dignified position. Everything else is defective – only love is perfect. Justice is also defective. Justice comes to divide things between many; no unity results. This is the position of justice. But above that is the land of affection, the land of love: prema-bhumi. Love only can be the most comprehensive cause; that can accommodate or harmonize anything and everything. Love is the most generous, the most accommodating, and the most fulfilling.

This is the conclusion of the Srimad-Bhagavatam, which has been conceived as the ripe fruit of the Veda. The ripe fruit of the Veda means that it is revealed truth. Revealed truth is that which does not originate from the experience of so many fallen souls, from their limited brains. No, it is coming from above, from the land of the eternally extended truth. And ripe fruit means it is in its full-fledged position: the highest conception of love. There we will find love, beauty, affection, mercy, charm. They are all similar, of the same taste and kind.

Our soul must go to that land of love. This body will remain here. Our mind which is always seeking the limited happiness of this world will also be dissolved. They will all disappear. At the present, the body and the mind are our ‘property’. But the inner factor, the soul – that conscious unit which is within us – can only be a member of that soil. Soul is our proper self, and these other things are all encasements. The mental system and the physical system are encasements, and they want this mortal world. That is their misconception.

## **The Willing and The Able**

**Devotee:** When we play a recording of our Gurudeva, are these sound vibrations actually transcendental or does the sound have to be heard from the person directly?

**Srila Guru Maharaj:** When I joined newly I was sent with a particular sannyasi to Benares. I appreciated his explanation of the scriptures such as Srimad-Bhagavatam. One day he told me, “Now the atmosphere here has been created in such a way that if I am ordered to construct a centre of our own, purchasing land, etc., then I can do, but that won’t be sanctioned by the authorities, because in that way I would become increasingly glorified: I would gain more pratistha.”

Presently I wrote in a letter to my Guru Maharaj: “This Maharaj has created a good, favourable atmosphere here. If he is ordered to construct a centre of our own, perhaps he can do. I think Benares is an important place, a meeting place of all different religious sections, so I feel we should have our own centre here. I

pray that you may encourage this sannyasi to arrange for it to happen.” We were at that time in a hired house and the Deities were also established there.

The reply did not come directly to me, but the general-secretary wrote to me, “We already know that his preaching is very successful. You try to listen to his analytical explanation of Bhagavatam and enrich yourself by that.” No mention was made about the point I had made. After some time our Srila Prabhupada went to Benares for some other purpose, and perhaps when I was alone he suddenly said to me, “What will be the effect of karmma-kanda?”

Karmma-kanda is to use our energy for our own satisfaction, and not meant for the satisfaction of Krsna. What is the necessity of connecting something according to our whim? Only we shall do what Krsna will desire, and that will be service.” He gave an example: “Suppose a Vaisnava or the Lord, has instructed, ‘Bring me some flowers,’ and I collect the flowers but as I am about to give them to him he says, ‘No, no. I don’t want flowers, bring me water.’ If even at that time I press him, ‘Oh, already you have ordered me to bring flowers, please accept these;’ it will be karmma-kanda. It will be thrusting my will upon him, it will not be service.’ Because he is independent he may order something – and again he may cancel that same order. He is in such a position that he is not bound by his own previous expression, he is independent of that. The will is everything and he can express his will and he can withdraw his will. His position is such. Independent. His independence is of such quality and characteristic. Similarly, the highly powerful brahmanas can give a curse such as one that will cause full forgetfulness – and they can withdraw it too.

Karna went to Dronacharyya disguised as a brahmana. Then Dronacharyya taught him everything about weapons. One day Parasurama went to sleep putting his head on the thigh of Karna. Indra, in the form of a worm, then pierced through the thigh of Karna and bit into the head of Parasurama. Parasurama started, “What is this?” Blood flowed and smeared over his body. Dronacharyya then confronted Karna, “You are not a brahmana! A brahmana cannot tolerate like this, therefore you must be a ksatriya. Why have you come to me? You have taken all this education about weapons from me by falsehood, therefore I throw a curse that at the time of your greatest need you will forget everything.” He thereby withdrew all the learning he had given. Free-will is of such nature that it may sometimes give a commitment, but if necessary it may withdraw from all commitment.

There are so many political heads of a nation who sometimes give commitments and try to oblige. They try to oblige but, if necessary for the good, they may retract that and guide by ordinance. Similarly the scriptures are something like that. The sastras are written by the mahatmas who give instructions through the medium of so many symbols in the form of letters of the alphabet. That has some value, but that value is not to the same degree as we find in the writer: it is something less. Similarly if the will, the centre from which the vibration is passing, is still in connection – i.e. if consent is there – it will work. Our Guru Maharaj gave Harinam initiation to a man in Dhaka who was due to pass away within a few days. He spoke the mantra over the phone, but his consent was there so it was effective. And when instruction is given as in a book, or recorded on a tape recorder and broadcast in many ways, it has its value, but the power-house is above all.

*maya tatam idam sarvvam, jagad avyakta-murtina  
mat-sthani sarvva-bhutani, na caham tesv avasthitah*  
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 9.4.)

“Everything is in Me, and I am nowhere: nothing is in Me.” Acintya-bhedabheda-tattva. He can withdraw, and also He can pervade through everything. It is His will. Many people may read the sastra, but if there is any curse upon someone he will not receive any benefit by such reading, or even from the original person or by any faithful connection with him. He will be barred.

Durvasa cursed Sakuntala: “You are neglecting me by engaging in deep meditation upon your husband. I am a respectable guest but you ignore me. I therefore curse you that if you are introduced to your husband he won’t be able to remember a single thing about you.”

Then three friends of Sakuntala came and petitioned, “Oh, Rsi, be propitiated by us, please withdraw your curse.” As a result, he modified it so that if any reminding token be shown to the husband he will be able to remember her.

The will, the intention, is the important part. What is coming must not be cut off from the source, the power-house. Not only the power-house keeper through whom it came, but also the faithful group, the associated clan, they can have some such power to stop as well as to open. It is not that if I have the tape recording I have received everything from him: that I have full possession of his

property. It cannot be done like that. Still mainly it is conducted in such a manner through the scriptures: the various sages have written so many sastras for us to read. However, our attention must be qualified to read such scriptures. Mere reading is intellectualism and that won't do. We are to read in a proper way – pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya (with humility to the Guru who knows the truth, relevant inquiry to him and service to him), and jaho bhagavat pada vaisnavat sthane. Through His agent if we properly read, then it will be beneficial, otherwise due to our deceptive nature we shall try to caste our own opinion in the name of the sastra as Sankaracharya did. He interpreted the Vedas but he did not try to draw the real meaning of the Vedas. He caste his own opinion into the Vedas and gave that to us.

Mahaprabhu said of him, “Sankaracharya has not accepted the teaching of the Vedas as it is. He modified the teachings of the Vedas by his own intellectual experience, therefore in his writings is not found their real purpose.” This was the charge against Sankaracharya by Mahaprabhu.

Rupa Goswami and Sanatan Goswami did not only write what Mahaprabhu taught directly to them, but, by the blessings of Mahaprabhu they were able to expree more. He told them, “I am inspiring you. I am giving some good-will to you that will help you to face all possible difficulties when the necessity comes for you to refute the opposing elements. It will work at that time, my good-will will be with you. It will come to your relief at the very time you are in need.” That was expressed by Mahaprabhu to both Rupa and Sanatan.

Well-wishing without the help of sound is also possible. There is assertion in different planes to help the surroundings. To think good of someone has its value. If the Guru thinks good of someone has its value. If the Guru thinks good about the disciples, they may thrive thereby and achieve the real object of their search. Both parties have some part to play: one party must do the willing, and the other must have the receiving quality and attitude, then it will be transmitted from one place to another. If the door is closed on one side there will be no effect. If there are the qualities of a Guru in one and the qualities of a disciple in another, when they both come together the transaction begins.

Electricity cannot pass through anything and everything. Some things are non-conducting. The sincere receiving attitude from the disciple is a necessary part otherwise no effect can be shown. If seeds are cast on stony ground no crops will grow. When current passes through a medium that cannot cent-per-cent transmit,

it becomes modified. In this way modification comes from Guru to disciple. Some colour is added and that is passed on and again added to, generation after generation.

Many disciples may hear from one Guru, but according to the variegatedness in their capacity of reception when they in turn will give delivery there will be some sort of difference. At first the teaching was one, but now there is a jungle. Krsna in Bhagavad-gita says,

*imam vivasvate yogam, proktavan aham avyayam  
vivasvan manave praha, manur iksvakave 'bravit  
evam parampara-praptam, imam rajarsayo viduh  
sa kaleneha mahata, yogo nastah parantapa  
sa evayam maya te'dya, yogah proktah puratanah*  
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 4.1-3)

“I first gave this instruction of karmma-yoga to Vivasvan, then from him to Manu who gave it to his son Ikshvaku. Coming down in this way it has gradually vanished. Now again I am saying that same old thing to you.” The spiritual truth becomes coloured by our prejudices. It becomes contaminated and modified by mundane thought.

On the banks of the Ganges there may be neem trees, tamarind trees, mango trees, etc. They all draw the same Ganges water for nourishment but the produce of one is bitter, another is acidic, and another gives sweet fruits. They all are nourished from the same source but according to their nature their produce vary.

Both Indra and Virochan are students of the Brahman conception of “so’ham.” Indra thought “so” means the atma, and Virochan thought like a demon that “so” means this body. “So ‘ham” – “I am that.” But who is “that”? Within the same class some thought it to refer to the soul, but some thought it referred to the body, thus they evolved their varying conceptions according to their local prejudices.

**They are not afraid of any condition of life**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** The day before Lord Ramacandra was to be installed on the throne, all in the kingdom were rejoicing, but Ramacandra Himself was in a serious frame of mind. His mood was not very light, not very pleasing. He was thinking that the next day, He is going to receive the great responsibility of discharging His duty to the kingdom:

“A great burden is coming on My shoulders, on My head. I shall have the responsibility of looking after so many subjects...” This was His sober mood. Then when He heard that instead of being enthroned, He is to go to the forest, that His stepmother has forced His father to enthrone Bharata, her son, and to banish Ramacandra to the forest, Ramacandra’s temperament remained the same: He is going to discharge a duty. To get the throne, to be enthroned, is duty; and to obey His father’s will by going to the forest, that is also duty. By accepting banishment to the forest, He is discharging a duty, and His temperament does not change. His balance of mind, His equilibrium, is not disturbed. Whether enthronement or banishment, His temperament is the same: He is going to discharge the duty that is coming to Him. He is not slave to any event, be it good or bad; to carry out His duty, He is perfectly equipoised. Even if He must have to go to hell, He is not in any way disturbed. And such a quality is also manifest in the exclusive devotees of the Lord:

*narayana-parah sarve  
na kutascana vibhyati  
svargapavarga-narakesu  
api tulyartha-darsinau*  
(Srimad.Bhagavatam 6:17:28)

“Devotees solely engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana, never fear any condition of life. For them the heavenly planets, liberation, and the hellish planets are all the same, for such devotees are interested only in the service of the Lord.”

This verse is in connection with the following story related in the Srimad Bhagavatam. Once Lord Siva was sitting with his wife Parvati on his lap; at his desire she is there, and he is resting. Just then his friend and previous classmate Citraketu happened by, and, seeing this, he made some remark:

“O Sankara, what are you doing? Of course, I don’t question your dignity; but, to

the public, it is not a good lesson, not a good example. You should consider this.”

Parvati was enraged:

“You don’t know the greatness of Mahadev? You are making some remark about him, you are ridiculing his practice? Your views are not pure, so you must go to take a demonic birth.”

But Citraketu only said, “Yes, I accept your curse.” And he went away.

Then Mahadev his mood a little excited, angry, spoke to Parvati, “Do you know them: the devotees of Narayana? Do you know who they are?”

Citraketu has not done anything wrong. He is my friend; and what I am doing, publicly it should not be done, and that is why his remark is not very insulting to me. He is my friend, and in a friendly way he gave such a slight remark. And you could not tolerate it, you cast a curse upon him. But what was his attitude? He could have cast a similar curse to you, he has that power, but he did not do that; he only accepted your curse, and went away. So, who are those devotees? Do you know them?”

Then Lord Siva instructed Parvati with this sloka:

*narayana-parah sarve, na kutascana vibhyati,  
svargapavarga-narakesu, api tulyartha-darsinau*

“There is a class of person, the devotee of Narayana, they do not care for anything of this world, good or bad; both heaven and hell are equal to them. They are not afraid of any condition of life, they are prepared for any eventuality, whether ‘svarga’, ‘apavarga’, ‘naraka’, heaven, salvation or hell, all are equal to them.”

If such a devotee has to go to hell, the other sufferers there will be benefited, but no hellish thing will be able to touch him; he is always surrounded by the Lord’s protection. Just as, when a man in good health goes to serve an infectious patient, the infection cannot enter into him, but if the helping man’s own health is weak, he will fall prey to that bacillus, that infection. Similarly, the devotees of Narayana are of such quality, such a type, that wherever they are, whatever the unfavourable circumstances they are in, they are guarded, protected by the bhakti-rasa, their ‘under-garment’ is of the purest material, nothing can pierce and harm them.

So, tulyartha-darsinau, everything is equal in their eyes. Their vision is such. They are wandering in the world of Krsna; wherever they go is Krsna's will. And whatever comes to them, they see: "Oh, it is Krsna's will. I am serving His purpose..." They are living only with this idea: that they are serving His purpose. They are not suffering from any local interest, but always they are in such consciousness, broadest consciousness; they remain always merged in the universal interest.

Once, after the Kuruksetra war was finished, one boy rsi named Uttanka, met Krsna and told Him:

"Krsna, I shall curse you."

"O, why?"

"Because You are the cause of all the misery that is the outcome of that great, vast battle of Kuruksetra, so many widows, so many orphans, so many crippled persons, they are all crying, out of pain and misery, and You are at the bottom of it all!"

Then Krsna said, "Oh, you rsi-kumar, boy rsi, whatever you have accumulated by your power, your penance, that will be finished if you will come to engage it, to utilise it against Me. Nothing, no effect, will come to Me; it will be unable to have any effect on Me. I am in nirguna. My position is such: nirguna, without any mundane quality, material quality, and gunatita, transcending the material qualities. There is sattva-rajah-tamah, the three gunas, materially binding qualities of goodness, passion, and ignorance. But above these three, there is the universal angle of vision; and there, I am. My position is there. That plane is ahaituki-apratihata; there is existing the causeless and irresistible flow of the most fundamental world.

Just as in the case of electricity which has its vibration, its flow, so, I am existing in a plane of dynamic movement; and that movement is irresistible, and it is causeless it has no object but is an automatic, wholesome movement of infinite character. I am there; all My activity is from that plane, so whatever waves from any other plane will come to clash with it, they will be finished, but the plane in which I am moving will continue forever. It is irresistible and it is eternal: it has no beginning and no end, it is a harmonious flow. I am there; and nothing can affect My position. Whatever you, rsi-kumar, have acquired, all of your relative power that will be finished if you throw it against the irresistible flow wherein I am moving." This was Krsna's reply.

So, the divine plane is nirguna, and in relation to that, not any external things but

the internal position should be judged. The internal situation, that is all-important.

Such criterion may be applied in the case of grhastha devotees also; their inner purity we may consider from this standpoint. The sannyasins, of course, should not cast any glance over the ladies; to do so they will consider a very filthy thing. But there are grhastha devotees who are producing so many children, still they may be cent-per-cent pure no enjoying mood, no spirit of exploitation, is in them. And it is not only that the enjoying mood may be absent, but they have a serving mood: the grhastha is joined in union and the child comes, but in that there is a fully serving mood, there is no mood of enjoyment. It may be so.

In a word: exploitation is bad, serving is good. The outer colour of the thing does not matter much if any activity is approached through the spirit of service, if it is the vibration from that causeless and irresistible, most fundamental plane which is actuating any movement, any external activity, whatever it may be, then that activity is cent-per-cent pure. So thieving, lying everything may be pure, if the vibration is coming from the most fundamental plane. If the motive power has come, has pushed from that plane, it is alright. That is the nirguna-lila. There is not only existing selflessness, but the fullest self-surrendering to the Centre, and all movement is actuated by that power, it is only an effect of that power. The cent-per-cent surrendered servitors are fully established in lila, and that is nirguna.

So, it is not by the form, but by the spirit, the real position, that things should be judged. And, whatever we think we are achieving, or we are understanding, by our local or provincial experience, if we are accepting that local interest as our standard, that has got no value. That is to say: it has value, but local value, temporary value, because it is partial. Its locality is partial; it is part of space, and also part of time, and that is all of limited value. That kind of standard, local standard, is to be applied to the ordinary persons, but not to the nirguna servitors. The activity, the movement, of such servitors may appear to be similar, it may apparently show so many similar things, undesirable things, even stealing, lying, fighting, but because their motivation is from the nirguna plane, it is not so. It's nature is of a different order.

## Transcendental Chronicle

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** All the top sages and saints were assembled there; and Pariksit Maharaj put the question, "Death is sure for me within seven days. How can I utilize my time? You are so many authorities, and by the grace of the Lord you have fortunately assembled here. I am at your disposal. Help me, that after this certain death I may attain blissful life."

Then according to their stages of realization, they gave advice. Some said yoga (or meditation), some recommended tapasya (religious penance), some *danam* (charity), and so one.

But Pariksit Maharaj again very humbly submitted, "You, of course, please give some unanimous verdict so it will be easy for me to follow your advice." They were discussing and consulting amongst themselves, but differences were going on in their opinions. At that very time, Sukadev Goswami appeared.

A young man of sixteen, without any dress - quite naked - but a good figure. Beautiful, stout and strong. Appearing as though half-mad, he entered the assembly. Some boys ran behind him, throwing dust and this and that, just as to a madman. The whole assembly stood in respect. The boys disappeared. All conjectured, "This must be that Suka about whom we have heard, but not had the chance of seeing. Perhaps that boy has come?" So all rose in respect, and then they could recognize him. Vyasadeva was also there. So Sukadev Goswami was welcomed, and unanimously he was given the chair of the speaker.

Then all the leading gentry of religious India of the time unanimously said, "We are all very eager to hear from this your. Maharaj, you are greatly fortunate. Your fortune has attracted him; so put questions to him, and let us all hear submissively. We have got a very good opportunity, and we want to hear him speak. We have waited for a long time to know his realization. In his eyes there is no distinction of man or woman. Women do not see anything in his eyes that they feel the necessity of shyness - such is his vision, which is not fixed in any worldly plane. There is no charm of any worldly thing in his heart. His eyes, his everything is meant for something transcendental. So we are very eager to know

his realization. Put your questions to him."

Sukadev Goswami also gave his own introduction. He expressed his own position: "parinisthito 'pi nairgunye - I was standardly trained in transcendental knowledge, and I am established there. But, uttamah-slokalilaya grhitaceta - my attention has been forcibly snatched to some higher cosmos, above the transcendental impersonal conception."

Generally, the philosophers of this world take the transcendental to be impersonal. Infinite and zero are of the same characteristic. So it is an area in which we cannot have any entrance as a subject for investigation. The subject has its stand far below; he can only conjecture some hazy thing. This is the position of the jiva-soul. So his view is only something cloudy, like sky. So the spiritual sky is also seen as one sees an infinite blue sky, that is, Brahma. Non-differentiated, non-specified, infinite space, which we cannot have any practical experience of. Nirguna. That is the summation of all negation. To us, the positive experience is confined only to this world. This ear-experience, this eye-experience, touch-experience, etc. Our property here is the sum total of these experiences and something drawn from the mental world. This is saguna. And all this experience fails to have any conjecture of that background, so that is nirguna. All experiences are absent there. The positive knowledge of our experience is completely absent there. So that is nirguna. Or so we are told by the philosophers of this world.

"parinisthito 'pi nairgunye - I am well established there. Pari - means sampurna-rupena, 'perfectly' I am established there, always in connection of what you call negation of all these positive things we experience in this world. Uttamah-slokalilaya grhitaceta rajarse - "But Oh Kind, here I give vent to my real stage: uttamah sloka-lilaya Some extraordinarily higher wave, current, has carried me to some other world, and that cannot be a part of this world of experience. Uttamah - ut means udgatah tamo, urdhvde tamo. No nescience is to be traced there, no darkness, no ignorance. Of that I am sure. That sphere is all light, all knowledge. All else is below. That is rather the foundation.

He is all consciousness, pure consciousness. Nothing mundane is to be traced there. This is beyond all conceptions of ignorance, beyond misconception. Uttamaih slokyate and uttamah slokah. Sloka means charitra, 'conduct.' A flow of life is to be traced there which cannot be compared with anything of this mundane jurisdiction. A higher conception of life, rather the highest conception

of life. I am captured totally by the charm of that sort of life, that sort of Pastimes, that sort of flow of nectarine activity. I have come in connection with this; grhitaceta rajarse - my understanding has been forcibly carried and engaged there. I can't come away, I can't come down from that charming land. Ukhyanam yad dhitavan - So I had to come to my father Vedavyasa. Before this, he tried his best to take me to that direction, but I didn't care to know about it. I had to return to my father, and as a regular student I had to study the ways and nature of that Higher Entity.

Tadaham te 'bhidhasyami mahapaurusiko bhavan - "You are a great personality, and it is befitting you have the highest prospect of life, the highest end. You are fortunate to receive that sort of attainment. I shall just try to give you the news of my experience of the Transcendental Lila of the Reality, the Beautiful. Divine Love."

With this introduction he began to deliver his lecture which continued for seven days. Through different questions and answers Krsna-lila was established, and all the religious authorities of the time very submissively gave their hearing to the Teachings of Sukadev Goswami, Srimad-Bhagavatam. Krsna-lila is meant for whom? The lila is transcendental. It has much similarity with the lustful movements of this world, but it is just the opposite.

*atmendriya-priti-vancha - tare bali 'kama'*  
*krsnendriya-priti-iccha dhare 'prema' nama*  
(Chaitanya charitamrta, Adi-lila, 4.165)

*ataeva kama-preme bahuta antara*  
*kama - andha-tamah, prema - nirmala bhaskara*  
(Chaitanya-charitamrta, Adi-lila 4.171)

For the souls in bondage, their aspiration is mostly men for women, and women for men. Because we find there the most food for the senses. The food of the major portion of our senses is to be found there. So natural attraction is there, in all of nature, even in the trees, the beasts, human beings - we find this everywhere. But this is a perverted reflection. And just the opposite - like Sumeru and Kumeru - South pole and North pole - one is desperately searching after sense-pleasure, and another, the opposite: the highest dedication one can command for the satisfaction of the Centre.

In this plane there is provincialism, selfishness, and extended selfishness. But in the infinite, extended selfishness has no value. I may be self-interested, or have at heart the interest of the family members, or the society, or the country; or even the whole globe or the whole solar system. But that is only an infinitely small part. In comparison with the Infinite Existence it has no value. So what is the conception of the whole? We must dedicate everything. Even an atom of our energy should go to the Centre, and nothing less than that will do. And what sort of centre? In the Bhagavad-Gita, Krsna says to Arjjuna,

*athava bahunaitena kim jnatena tavarjuna  
visthabhyaham idam krtsnam ekam sona sthito jagat*

"What more shall I try to enumerate to you Arjjuna? I am here, I am there, everything is within Me; know in a nutshell that whatever you can conceive of is contained in but a fraction of Me." This is the conception of the Infinite.

We once read, 'Everywhere there is centre, nowhere circumference; this is the infinite.' This offers us some suggestion of the infinite. So whatever the smallest energy I can command, it must be directed toward the Centre who represents the Whole Infinite, and more - so many infinities constitute a part of Him. How to connect with that most difficult to conceive Reality?

It can only come down by the deductive method - Srauta-pantha, and never by the empirical method. He can come, be we cannot go there. We can only submissively accept. That is by our free will, and free will must be guided by sukrti, fortune, jnata or ajnata - knowingly or unknowingly. Then it comes to the level of sraddha, faith proper.

If I serve the Centre, everything is served, and perfectly. Otherwise if I serve anything else, that is like a conspiracy between two robbers or thieves. Nothing more than that. Misguided, they combine for a conspiracy. So the centre of welfare of the whole must be detected, otherwise our energy will be lost. How is it possible? Is it possible at all? The unknown and unknowable, the 'N'th degree. Can we reckon on entering the infinite?

I mentioned several times before, I was challenged by one 'Vedic' leader, "If the finite can know the infinite, He's not infinite." And I could reply, by the grace of my Guru Maharaj, "If the infinite cannot make Himself known to the finite, then He's not infinite. And we have to catch that. Only His agents can help us to catch

the thread. This is the gist of the matter.

Every sincere offering will be considered when everything of high value is offered to the feet of God and Gurudev. For so long our minds have been captured by the charm of the beauty of this world. All of it should be dedicated to God and the Guru, and that way we can get relief from the charm of those bright things in this world. Everything considered to be good must be devoted to Them.

*yat karosi ad asnasi yaj juhosi dadasi yat  
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kurusva mad arpanam*  
(Bhagavad-gita, 9.27)

Varnasrama-dharma is to dedicate everything to Krsna. But in an indirect way. So in the dialogue with Sri Ramananda Ray, Sriman Mahaprabhu said, "This is also superficial, go deeper."

Ramananda Ray said, "We must be fully conscious that all the activities of Varnasrama have not indirect, but direct connection with Krsna." If the fruits of all work are offered with a mantra like *etat karma-phalam sri krsnaya samarpitam astu*, that is only the indirect way to 'touch the nose' as such. But directly, everything is meant to satisfy Krsna. We should discharge any sort of duty in this world, merged with that consciousness. With Krsna consciousness at heart. So everything considered charming and beautiful must be devoted to the Service, and then only can we get out of the charm of those things. By the utilization of the present environment for the Service of the Lord, we can cross this world successfully and go up towards a more conscious and spiritual area - the soul area. Bhur, Bhuvar, Svar, Mahara, Janar, Tapo, Satya - these are the planes (lokas) of this world.

I asked Swami Maharaj to construct a Temple where the whole Gaudiya Vaisnava Philosophy will be demonstrated. I had a mind to construct such a Temple here, but that was too ambitious and I could not do it. When I was told that he would build a Temple there (in Mayapur), I humbly put forward my desire. I wanted a Temple to be built according to the Brhad-Bhagavatamrtam of Srila Sanatan Goswami. The whole structure of Gaudiya Vaisnava Philosophy will be represented there in that Temple. Bhur, Bhuvar, Svar, Mahar, Janar, Tapo and Satyaloka will be shown in a spiral way, and then Viraja, Brahmaloaka, Paravyoma, Goloka-Vrndavan. The idea is to demonstrate the structural position

of Gaudiya Vaisnava Theology, and from where Krsna has come down to this world to very kindly give us the clue to how we can be uplifted there, to the highest place. That should be dealt with in a scientific way.

Whoever comes to have the darsan of the Temple will leave with an idea of the whole structure of all the religious conceptions to ever come into the world. The development is in a scientific basis. What is Bhurloka? The land of experience of the five senses. Bhuvārloka? Without this body, the mental experience world, and there are further gradations Svar, Mahar, Janar, Tapo. Bhurloka is somewhat Prthvīloka (Earth); there is also Pretaloka, the world of the dead; there is Devaloka or Svarloka, heaven; above Devaloka is Mahārloka where resides Bhṛgu and other Rsis. Then there is Tapoloka where the Chatuhsana reside, and then Satyaloka of Lord Brahma.

Then Viraja, the highest position aspired for by the Buddhists, prakṛti-laya. And above that, brahma-laya, the end aspired for by the Sankarites; then Sivaloka, Bhakta-Siva, and Vaikuntha, the Land discovered and made known to the world by Sri Ramanuacharya. In that Area of Paravyoma, there are so many Vaikunthas in so many different phases of the Pastimes of Lord Narayana who resides in the centre. Then above is Ayodhya with Ramachandra with the first introduction of Vatsalya Rasa (Divine Parenthood). Then there is Krsna with many Queens in Dvaraka, and Krsna in Mathura. Again, in the Mathura Sphere is Vrndavan, Govardhan, Radhakunda. From what standpoint does the Theistic Conception develop higher and higher - this is to be depicted.

He accepted this plan and asked his followers to construct such a Temple. But I am too old. He could not see it fulfilled, and perhaps I too may not see it. Still, (addressing Srila Swami Maharaj Prabhupada's visiting disciples) your combination is greatly encouraging, and what you are doing is a very big thing beyond our expectations. We could not imagine the success as was attained by my revered Godbrother Swami Maharaj. So much so, that I cannot but think of him as Saktyavesavatar. Some higher power came and inspired him and worked for him. Otherwise such a tremendous action in the plane of such a high degree of Theology can never be expected to happen. Some super, higher Divine power worked in him. There is no doubt of this.

*muktanam api siddhanam narayana-parayanah  
sudurlabhah prasantatma kotisv api maha-mune  
(Srimad Bhagavatam, 6.14.5)*

*tapasvibhyo 'dhiko yogi jnanibhyo 'pi mato 'dhikah  
karmibhyas cadhiko yogi tasmad yogi bhavarjuna  
(Bhagavad-gita 6.46)*

*yoginam api sarvesam mad-gatenantaratmana  
sraddhavan bhajate yo mam sa me yuktatamo matah  
(Bhagavad-gita 6.47)*

Wealth from the highest plane was taken in and distributed so lavishly in the world. It is a supernatural activity of supernatural power. You all represent him, and you are present before me today. I am so happy, and think myself fortunate to be in your midst. As Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur told, "In the near future the Westerners will join the Indian here under the common banner of Lord Chaitanya, and go on with Krsna-kirtan." And Prabhupada - our Guru Maharaj - began, and what was half fulfilled was completed in a great magnitude by Swami Maharaj. This is unbelievable for us! Hare Krsna, Gaura Hari bol, Nitai Chaitanya, Dayal Nitai, Gaura Hari bol!

**Visiting devotee:** I am very grateful to you for reminding me of Prabhupada, and enlightening me further about His Divine Grace.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, around 1944, he was in business. Whenever he had some money in his hand, an issue of Back to Godhead would come to us. And every now and then he would say, "Oh, let us go and attack Jawaharlal and Gandhi! What are they doing? If they really want to do good for the people why don't they take the line of Mahaprabhu, the line of Gaudiya Math? They are wild-goose chasing and getting so much name and fame - let us go and attack!" And he wrote letters to them now and then. Sometimes he received a reply, sometimes not, but he wouldn't let up. He also had to fight with his worldly life as well, not only in the matter of property, but the characteristic of his family was not very favourable. *yasyaham anugrhnami harisye tad dhanam sanaih* (Bhagavatam, 10.88.8) - to attract one wholesale to Himself, Krsna arranges things in such a way that the environment may not be favourable for worldly life.

He also had some original thinking in the business line. He created, from oil, some medicine for injection. One doctor told him that oil could never be injected, but he replied that milk could whereas ghee couldn't. His logic was that ghee comes from milk, so although oil cannot be injected it has a more

fundamental state from which it may be prepared for injection to give the result of that particular oil. That was his original conception, as a chemist - to harness oil for injection.

And when he was an agent of Bengal Chemicals he came into real connection with Prabhupada, his Gurudev. Before that he had, with his friend, only a cursory view of Prabhupada in Calcutta once only, perhaps for an hour or so. But he actually came to connection with his Guru in Allahabad. Just before that, Sripad Tapasvi Maharaj (at that time Sri Atulananda Brahmachari), was the Math-command at that Allahabad Math, and I visited there for some particular devotional activity. He took me to Swami Maharaj (later initiated as) Sri Abhaya Charanaravinda Das. Then I arranged for one evening of Bhagavata-patha (recitation) of the Bhagavatam). It was also arranged for us to take prasadam there. His father, Gour Mohan, was living, and he also was very happy to see us. From that time was the beginning of his permanent connection with Gaudiya Math.

Guru Maharaj came back to Allahabad from Vrndavan after the completion of the Vrndavana parikrama, and that was when Swami Maharaj took initiation and came into closer connection. Perhaps that was in 1933 or so, when the foundation was laid by the governor of Allahabad for the Rupa-Gaudiya Math Lecture Hall. Then Swami Maharaj went to Bombay, leaving that previous service, and took the business line independently. I was in his association there as well. Then later he left Bombay and came to Calcutta, and there we were his sub-lessee and next-door neighbour. There were four rooms. The ground floor was his laboratory. So, I had closer connection with him than any other Godbrothers. We also had deep discussions - about Bhagavad-Gita, the Gaudiya Math principles and Mahaprabhu, all these things.

Once I remember he sent a postcard from Allahabad to me, in which he said, "I am disgusted with human society. Rather the birds and the beasts seem to be very friendly to me, but I am disgusted with human society." Then, after he took sannyasa, he devoted himself totally to his Bhagavatam translation, and gradually Prabhupada's (Prabhupada Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur's) inspiration came and he went to your land.

Prabhupada had sent his men to England, but he wrote in Gaudiya, "Markin-muluk - the country of America - has not yet been attempted for Mahaprabhu's service." And he expressed his heartfelt desire that Mayapur, the land of

Mahaprabhu, must be decorated with gold and diamonds. When Prabhupada had acquired some land for constructing Gaura-Kunda, one of his old disciples arranged an exchange of that land for another piece of land nearby just on the East side, where presently Nitai-Kunda is situated. Then Prabhupada told him, "I asked you to purchase the land, not exchange it for another, because the land you are offering for a swap is also necessary for a future purpose of mine."

In this way, a little heated discussion came up, and in the course of that Prabhupada said - a very transcendental sentiment arose in him and he said, "The land of Mahaprabhu, the Temple - super-consciously higher materials - will all be transcendently decorated with diamonds and gold. I shall discover the whole of the Dhama, and reveal it to the eyes of the people of the world. So much so, that if I need money, just by selling one brick of the Temple I shall get millions, and with that I shall restore the whole Dhama and show to the people what sort of opulence and majesty the Dhama has." So feelingly he expressed this. Madly he expressed such a desire to reveal the land of Mahaprabhu Chaitanyadev in a golden colour. "What was He?"

Radha-Govinda-milita-tanu - Radha-Govinda combined in One - the Lustrous Expression of the Land of Love and Beauty - and who was so magnanimous He came to distribute Himself to the people at large. That highly valuable thing was arranged to be given to the people at large. So magnanimous, so kind, it must be brought to the consciousness of the people that they may have such a prosperous prospect, and that they can attain that. And that is being distributed from here." That was his feeling.

## **Unadulterated Purity**

**Devotee:** Maharaj, what is the meaning of chastity for the proper disciple?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Chastity is faithfulness to the cause for which we have come. It is a relative term. Chastity in the absolute sense is unchangeable adherence to Krsna consciousness. There also may be relative chastity, such as

when someone sincerely pursues his interest in a particular plane. However that type of sincerity is not complete. We think sincerity is only complete when one comes to accept Krsna consciousness of Godhead. Other forms of chastity are all relative.

No knowledge separate from Krsna consciousness is chaste. In Krsna consciousness also we may not think that by beginning, by getting the touch of Krsna consciousness we have acquired the whole thing. When we get the pure conception of Krsna consciousness the hazy conceptions will vanish. There are also different stages of realisation in pure Krsna consciousness and by its degree of awakening we become more and more chaste.

Chastity means our adherence to the truth. The truth that we have come to realise, that truth is in Krsna consciousness. Krsna consciousness is not a limited thing that one can capture in his hand and swallow. It is of infinite character. There is gradation and there is room for progress in Krsna consciousness. We will say that one is chaste due to his own sincere progress, not due to adherence to the figure, the formal conception.

*vyaso vetti na vetti va*

Such a strong expression is also there, *vyaso vetti na vetti va*. All rights reserved. Krsna consciousness is unlimited. Still there is the possibility of conceiving its purity in its unadulterated form, and the Acharyyas are giving that to us.

In the beginning a new student who gains admission to a college cannot expect to know anything and everything. We need to have systematic, properly adjusted knowledge.

There are many amongst our group who heard Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupad's advices and words, but only partly. One day a senior man and sannyasi, repeated something Srila Prabhupad had said. Although it related to a particular time and place, he wanted to utilise that in a universal way. I gave some objection: "Maharaj, Srila Prabhupad told this, it is true, but this is not the whole thing. He explained other things also, therefore we have to harmonise.

We cannot ignore the other part of his advice."

We have to come into adjustment and systematic understanding of the words of Sri Gurudeva. The partial aspect may sometimes lay stress on a particular point and who has attentively caught that, he may only take that and nothing beyond.

But systematic knowledge of the whole must be understood. In a progressive life the plane where one devotee may want to withdraw from to make further progress, may be the goal of attainment for another devotee. The object of attainment for the kanistha-adhikari, a madhyama-adhikari may withdraw from in his attempt to climb higher, as in ascending a staircase step by step.

Under the guidance of one Guru there are so many different sections of disciples. All the students may not be equal in their realisation. One can understand to a certain extent, another can understand something more, and another can understand even more. In this way there may be gradation. Even the senior disciples may fall back and the juniors may go up. That is also possible. We have seen and you can also see now. Many of the older ones have gone away and the newcomers are showing greater energy. You may find that amongst yourselves, as we also found amongst ourselves. There are no stereotyped rules. It is a living thing.

Krsna is there. He says that He has not finished Himself in His own sastras. “What I have given in the sastras, you must do that, but one who crosses that to come to Me is My higher servitor.” So, Krsna is living and He is above all. A transaction, a trade may be made by cash or by loan. Whether trading, or purchasing with cash, or purchasing with a loan, He is there, He is master, He is autocrat. His dealings should not be limited even by the Scriptures. He says, “Even crossing the Scriptures I exist, even though those directions are given by Me.”

*ajna-jai-va gunan dosan, mayadistan api dvakan  
dharmman samtyajya yah, sarvvan myam bhajet sa ca sattamah*

So, directions are of different classes. And Krsna says, “Sometimes it will be necessary to show devotion to Me, even crossing My own laws.” We must also consider the realisations of higher devotees. So many things are there, but the main thing is faithfulness. To die for the cause. Die to live!

Simplicity means to be independent of ancient prejudices, to be empty, to be unpossessed of the mal-possession. To be clear. To be free of foreign possession, that is simplicity.

Formal and substantial. They are two different things, and here is the main difficulty in our progress. Sreyah sva-dharmme... Progress means to deal with these two difficulties, to stick to one's former position, and beyond that, to make

progress – advance. If advancement is not sure, it is judicious to stick to the former position. If there is any doubt of progress one should stick to the former position. But that is not progress. Progress means to leave the former position and go ahead. Only one who is hopeful of his bright future, should leave his former position and go to advance. Those who are of doubtful mentality, suspicious mentality, it is better for them to stick to their former position where they already have a consolidated foundation.

They should take their stand there. According to his own progress he cannot but see that some things must be rejected and some new things in front must be invited to come near. Progress means this.

In his book Brhad-Bhagavatamrtam, Srila Sanatana Goswami has given sambandha-jnana, the knowledge of the relationship between ourselves and the Lord. We have to follow that closely. That means proper adjustment. At first we shall have some sort of approximate knowledge and that will be realised more and more. Taking our stand in a particular position if we look out we will be able to say, ‘this is here,’ ‘this is there,’ ‘this is lower,’ ‘that is higher.’ In Krsna consciousness we must understand sambandha-jnana.

What I do not find to be my own I must not take risk for that. But when I find ‘this is my own’ even though it may be a little far, then I must jump there. This is my own and my inner hankering is only searching for that thing, and if I find that is within my reach, then I must jump there. It depends on our sincerity and our proper understanding.

There are many who cannot control the temptation from within to exploit the Guru or Krsna – guru-bhogi, krsna-bhogi – and create some facilities for their own personal exploitation. That is also possible. A real student, a bonafide student, must be alert on all sides whether non-Krsna is coming in disguise. We must try to recognise that and save ourselves. If we are sincere no one can disturb us.

Vibhisan said:. “We must be very careful about the maya-tactics of the opposing party.” Hanuman was keeping Rama and Laksman in a room made of his tail, and Vibhisan warned Hanuman: “Be very careful! Mahiravana will come and try to deceive you in disguise.” Then at last Mahiravana came in the garb of Vibhisan himself and took them away.

There is a good possibility that maya will approach us. We have to be very

careful to protect those valuable tendencies within us and maintain our taste and the vision of our inner awakening. We must maintain that and if possible make some progress in our line. That is our interest.

‘God save me from my enemies.’ And, ‘God save me from my friends’ – that expression is also there. You must be alert that as a friend someone may not go to deceive you. You must be so much careful. At your own risk pray to the Supreme, the Chaitya-guru, for giving you the right direction: “What is what? What is to be accepted?” It is a crucial point.

I don’t want to take the responsibility. Mahaprabhu and Krsna also do not take the responsibility. Even though Krsna can control everything, He also says: “You are free.”

In the Srimad Bhagavad-gita Krsna instructs: “I have said what I had to say. Now, Arjjuna, you decide what you want to do. Vimrsyaitad asesna. Think it over exhaustively. Think it over to the best of your ability and then decide what step you are going to accept.”

## **Unconditional Service**

Try to adjust yourself through sound only, the subtlemost element of this plane. Through sound, go on cultivating spiritual life; and that too must be approached with a serving attitude, otherwise it will be futile. We are recommended to approach divinity through the most subtle element of this gross world. Although it is apparently nothing to us at present, this divinity is actually everything.

So, accept the subtlemost thing. But if the very life is absent, our search will be futile. Learn to give yourself, learn to die, to embrace so-called death at every second. Even in this world we find the "do-or-die" attitude in ambitious politicians, social workers, etc. In every duty and at every step they are ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause. If one embraces that do-or-die principle of life, he is sure to progress very intensely and become a great success.

Service means self-giving, self-dedication, and this should be our attitude to approach that plane. In that way, all the coatings of ego will vanish one by one, and the genuine self will come from within and select its own soil: "This is my home." So many coverings are deviating us in different directions, taking us far, far away from our svarupa, our real noble self--a servant in the highest plane of the whole organism. The Beautiful is playing, dancing in His own sweetness and affection, and we can reach Him, following such a course of "do-or-die" at every moment.

Through self-giving I can acquire my fortune, and not as a master sitting in my chair gathering information from different quarters to utilize for my selfish plans. Adau sraddha tatah sadhu-sanga atha bhajana-kriya (Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu- Purwa, 4.15): to progress with faith, keeping the association of devotees and dedicating one's activities to the Lord, means this you must go forward in your life with the spirit that you are willing to give away this life. Do-or-die is, of course, not in the physical sense but the internal sense (bhajana-kriya). This is self-giving, ego-giving.

Tato anartha-nivrtth syat : if you can adopt this, the undesirable things within you will disappear very easily and swiftly. Tato nistha : then you will find a continuous connection with such a principle in your life. That principle will always act continuously, and other fleeting, mean desires won't be able to approach or touch you. Next, you will find ruci, a real taste for divinity. Otherwise, before that continuous stage, whatever taste we may think we have is only treachery and not real taste. Nistha nairantarya: when we are established in twenty-four hours a day continuous connection with that charming substance, a real taste will arise, and we can rely on that taste. Any taste that we may find in any other position is unreliable. Twenty-four hours a day connection with divinity eliminating all other charms of this world-is necessary. Then, the ruci, the conscious taste that arises in us, is a reliable guide.

After that, asakti , natural affinity, arises, and then the symptoms of bhava , the bud stage of the flower of prema, divine love, makes its appearance. This is the way of our progress. But if there is any imitation, only offenses will be created. Those offenses will be recorded in that circle of the examiners of the upper quarter, and they will give a stamp of disqualification that we are criminal and unfit. This will go against us and hamper our future progress. Thus, we must be very careful not to commit offense, aparadha. It is better to be a newcomer with a new introduction than to have a criminal record, for that will go against us. We

must be very, very careful in our quest for the highest objective of our eternal life. This caution has been especially given by our Guru Maharaja, Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakura, and he attracted us to the line of exclusive devotion.

Sevonmukhe , serving attitude was foremost. Our Guru Maharaj did not allow us to read much, even of the lower types of scriptures dealing with general sadhana or practices, not to speak of the higher books. Rather, we were expected to actually follow those practices by hearing from the proper source and practicing accordingly whatever was instructed from there. Serving--learn to give yourself properly. There are different methods of service: sravana , hearing; kirtana , chanting; smarana , remembering; vandana , praying, etc. Srila Rupa Goswami has mentioned sixty-four kinds of devotional practices, and it is has also been further mentioned that there are one thousand types of devotional practices. The practices themselves are not very important; but the very life of the practice is all-important, for this is self-dedication. Thus we should be very particular to learn that dedication is work under a Vaisnava.

T ry to get practical training, working under a proper agent; that will help you most to learn and practice true dedication. Guidance must come from above. It may be very rare, but it is most valuable. We must selflessly surrender to whatever directive descends from above. "I won't serve my whims or the whims of men of my level, but whatever comes from the plane above, I shall obey very eagerly." This is the key, and this is service. Sevonmukhe, serving attitude, means what? One day, during the latter days of his presence in the world, our Guru Maharaja Srila Prabhupada said to a certain sannyasi who had led a full twenty years of life in the mission, "You did not see me-you could not see who I am. Like a zamindar you have kept some householder servitors under you, and from them you periodically give a donation to me. You have become like a broker, but you should be wholesale mine --my agent. You are not doing that. You are dependent on those householders while maintaining some connection with me. This is not necessary. You are not a member of this world. You are mine alone. Whatever I say, you should do. You should not sell yourself to anything or any proposal of this world. You are to be wholesale my servant." Thus, this necessary attitude is rarely to be found. We should surrender to whatever flows from the higher plane and thereby substantiate its reality.

*viracaya mayi dandam dinabandho dayam va  
gatih iha na bhavattah kacid anya mamasti*

*nipatatu sata-kotir nirbharam va navambhas tad  
api kila payodah stuyate catakena*

The bird known as Cataka always looks above for rainwater, but it will never take any water from the ground even if there is an abundance there. He waits only for whatever water will come from above. Sufficient rain may come, or thunder may come, yet he will not take even a single drop from the earth. Our attitude should be like that. We must follow whatever instruction and direction comes from above, and never try to fulfill any plan from the mundane world. "The Director," the Master, the Lord above --I am connected with Him." This sort of practice is conducive.

We may chant the name, hear the musical kirtan , etc., but the very life will be present only as much as our activity is on the order descending from the plane above, and as much as that order is earnestly being carried out by us. In that way, we may be taken above. We may be promoted to the higher layer by preparing ourselves only to carry out the order from above, without question. If we are certain that the order is coming from the higher layer, we should surrender without question. By living at the disposal of the higher, we learn selfless service of the higher, which is not of any mundane source. This is our necessity: Vaisnava-seva and Guru-seva-service to the Vaisnava and Guru. By Guru-bhakti alone--devotion to the service of Sri Gurudeva, in one stroke, all desirable pursuits will be accomplished.

*etat sarvam gurau bhaktya  
puruso hy anjasa jayet  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 7.15.25)*

There are also many symptoms by which to recognize the genuine Guru, and by obeying the directions of the higher, we can make progress towards the higher; we may hope to be selected by the higher and be taken up to that layer if we are considered sufficiently qualified. This attitude will be the main tenure of our lives if we want to go to the high, superconscious region. In the Vedanta-sutra, it is mentioned that the process to reach that region is by revealed truth and not by reason ( *tarkabe pratisthanat* ). If we apply reason, we shall be nowhere.

Among expert arguers, there may always be one more expert--in this way, on and on, no end. Thus, tarka, reason and argument, is inconclusive (*apratistha*). Intellectualism has no standing here, because super-consciousness is beyond our

jurisdiction. It cannot be an object of our intellect. By serving, by honoring, by self-giving, by heart-giving, and never otherwise, can we invite that high guest. It is not possible to capture and encage Him by intrigue and conspiracy. Such an attempt will betray Satan in another color.

Not only self-abnegation, but self-surrender is necessary to approach God. Deep self-surrender will take us into connection with the higher, noble substance, and it must be cultivated by all means. And service is not service to maya. I must be very careful to perceive that I am not merely serving maya, who has appeared in a charming or "godly" form. In our present position we must be extremely cautious regarding who and what we are serving.

The main wave will be *jnane prayasam udapasya* (Bhagavatam 10.14.3): hatefully discard ( *ud-apa-asya* ) all proposals that your intellect may offer you. Whatever the intellect can judge and accept or reject must necessarily be of a lower type. So you are to summarily reject that, and understand that you must bow down your head ( *namanta eva* ).

The beginning of your interest is to bow down your head, and your heart will be captured automatically. Try to connect with that section where you will always be with folded palms, and where you can never be master. Such abnegation and courage of self-giving is necessary if you want to live in the higher plane. Otherwise, you may reign in hell. According to Satan's word, "it is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven." But just the opposite is necessary.

Even tears and crying have no value if the inner tendency of self-giving is absent. Seva, service, means self-giving, and that is the standard principle in the life of a devotee. This self-giving must really be to the higher sphere and not just haphazardly around us, for that is another way to be captured by hateful things.

*Jnana* , knowledge, is generally regarded as being very pure. By the majority of people, jnana is considered to be very innocent because It has no relationship with gross, material things. It is always admitted that to handle the gross material energy is very unwholesome (*sasvad abhadram*); and knowledge is considered by the higher personalities to be very pure, very innocent and spotless (*jnanaṁ alam niraṇjanam*). But if it is not connected with Krishna, such knowledge must be hatefully rejected.

*naiskarmmyam apy acyuta-bhava- varjjiitam*

*na sobhate jnanam alam niranjanam*  
*Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.12*

Here, in the Srimad-Bhagavatam , it is said that knowledge is widely considered to be spotless, pure and innocent, but if it is not connected with the positive absolute good, then it is your enemy. A qualified candidate will consider things in this way.

*Jnana-sunya-bhakti* : Surrender is so pure, that any connection with knowledge, which is considered to be very innocent and pure-even that must be hatefully rejected. Such a degree of surrender is necessary for the higher association of genuine devotion.

Both the charm of material acquisition, and the charm of the mastery of knowing everything, are to be rejected (jnana-karmady-anavrtam). It is not possible for you to know anything about the infinite, either in magnitude or quality. The infinite is a flow of autocracy, so what can you know of it?

Therefore, knowledge means more than storing so many relative or false incidents, and selling that information to the world in order to fulfill some other function such as personal name and fame. Hatefully give this up and engage in unqualified and unconditional service. That is noble, and that will take you up to the nobler region.

Thus, *karma* and *jnana* --handling matter and handling knowledge--both are discouraged. Knowledge won't be allowed to enter that market where the absolute will and autocracy reign. No rule and regulation can work there. False gathering and false store have got no standing there.

Only surrender, and we will have that high relationship. Serving attitude is our friend. We are a unit of serving attitude, and service means to surrender to the higher. And the higher means the plane uncontaminated with material and intellectual acquisition. We must serve such a higher plane.

**Virtue is its own reward**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** I must seek the truth, internally. Virtue is its own reward. We shall be virtuous, that does not mean for something else, virtue is its own reward. That I am in the real path of searching the truth, that is its own reward. With this capital we must go forward. Can you follow?

**Devotee:** Yes, goodness for goodness sake.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** I am searching after truth, eliminating falsehood, dismissing sense of falsehood. That is the reward. Virtue is its own reward.

**Devotee:** I find myself and many of Srila Swami Maharaj's disciples who have left ISKCON have tremendous difficulty trying to...

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** According to your sincere conscience you will choose your companions. What can one do other than this? A sincere seeker of the truth can only do that. According to his own choice of conscience he will associate, find out, select association.

**Devotee:** It's so hard to regain *sadhana*.

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** No other alternative, otherwise I must be a cheater of myself. Near to my conscience I shall select my association who will be able to help me on this long journey.

And selection - only search after truth, that must have the first consideration, not any other thing, that I will get some name, fame, or money, or power. All these things must not come in consideration when we are searching a real companion, only the truth, not for anything outside, capital, temptation, or wealth. *anyabhilasa, karma, jnana*.

*anyabhilasita-sunyam, jnana-karmady-anavrtam  
anukulyena-krsnanu-silanam bhaktir uttama*

"One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Krsna favourably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service."  
(Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu, 1.1.11) + (Chaitanya-charitamrta, Madhya-lila, 19-167)

Neither power, nor rest, idleness, nor any fleeting desire, trifle things, neither trifle acquisition, nor an organised acquisition, or idleness or salvation that enters

into zero, to be reduced to be zero.

**Devotee:** When a devotee notices, how does a devotee rid himself of weeds that have crowded his creeper?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** I don't follow.

**Devotee:** Once a devotee realizes certain weeds that have surrounded his creeper of devotion, so how does he make progress and strength to overcome such weeds?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** By self analysis from time to time he'll find out whether he's being misguided by any other ulterior motive, thing. Self analysis, and what are they?

*atyaharah prayasas ca, prajalpo niyamagrahah  
jana-sangas ca laulyam ca, sadbhir bhaktir vinasyati*

"One's devotional service is spoiled when he becomes too entangled in the following six activities: (1) atyahara - eating more than necessary or collecting more funds than required; (2) prayasa - over-endeavouring for mundane things that are very difficult to obtain; (3) prajalpa - talking unnecessarily about mundane subject matters; (4) niyamagraha - practising the scriptural rules and regulations only for the sake of following them and not for the sake of spiritual advancement, or rejecting the rules and regulations of the scripture and working independently or whimsically; (5) jana-sanga - associating with worldly-minded persons who are not interested in Krsna consciousness; and (6) laulyam - being greedy for mundane achievements."(Upadesamrta, 2)

These six are detrimental to devotion proper. In Upadesamrta, just as before I told, that is contributing to devotion, and this will diminish the devotion. Atyaharah means whatever we get to collect that, and to also feed one's own self more than necessary. Not only by this food, but whatever I get I want something, I want a portion of that thing.

Prayasas ca, in Bhaktivinoda Thakura's Bengali translation of this there is visaya prayasa, some false errand, enthusiastic attempt for some undesirable, false scent, prayasas ca.

Prajalpa, and the slackness in the mind and to discuss anything and to enter into the discussion of anything and everything. One may read the newspaper, the

present topics, the war topics, and some other unnecessary things which happen around. To abuse the reign of our self-control and to allow to enter into the discussion of anything and everything outside what we get, that is prajalpa.

Niyamagrahah, to give extra attention, abnormal attention to any particular rulings. Rulings are always meant for some stage, and after passing that stage that ruling is no longer applicable to me, another ruling I shall have to mark. So in particular, just as suppose in the Ekadasi day we must fast, wholesale, without taking any drop of water, to be very much firm to such ruling. The general rule is I must keep my body fit for the service of the Lord, so to take something, some water, at least some sankalpa, I must not be very strict, over strict to a particular rule, so that the general law will be hampered, niyamagrahah.

Jana-sangas ca, and to be very approachable to the public persons, for politics, sociality, this and that, the poor feeding, all these, so many conceptions of ideal are there all around, and to allow to be chased, or to be captivated, captured by them, jana-sangas ca.

Laulyam ca, and laulya means the very softness of the nature. Whatever I get I want to note that. I am going to the market and something is, 'Oh, everything is trying to capture my attention.' So many things, hundreds of things we find and if anything and everything comes to capture my attention, that is laulya, weakness of the heart, or weakness of our promise, or our object of life. Whatever I find I engage myself in that. In the market, or anywhere and everywhere, everything is attracting my attention. We must save ourselves from these natures.

*atyaharah prayasas ca, prajalpo niyamagrahah  
jana-sangas ca laulyam ca, sadbhir bhaktir vinasyati  
and...  
utsahan niscayad dhairyat, tat-tat-karma pravartanat  
sanga-tyagat sato vrtteh, sadbhir bhaktih prasidhyati*

"To endeavour for spiritual life with enthusiasm, to be certain that the Lord will give His Grace, and therefore to patiently continue to render devotional service. By following the practices prescribed by the saints, to give up the company of those who are averse to devotion, and to tread the path which has been chalked out by the true Vaisnavas; these six practices will go a long way to help us be successful in our spiritual life."( Upadesamrta, 3

There it increases, and here it decreases, decrease and increase by these practices. And also there are some others.

*vaco vegam manasah krodha-vegam, jihva-vegam udaroprashta-vegam  
etan vegan yo viñaheta dhirah, sarvam apimam pathivim sa sisyat*

"A sober person who can control the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world." (Upadesamrta, 1)

Vaco vegam, not to get control over our speech, our speaking nature. Anything and everything I speak and then I repent, 'Why did I say so? I should not have told that thing, only to pain the heart of that gentleman.' Vaco vegam. When the force comes from within to say something I can't control. I may abuse a sadhu, also sometimes straight forward. 'I'm straight forward, I can say anything and everything to anyone and everyone.' And that should not be, we must try to control the force coming out in the form of speech, talk. We must have some control, balance. We shall try to keep up the balance of our mind.

Manasah, mental waves, sometimes some idea, the rush of some idea overtakes me and manipulates me to anything and everything.

Then, manasah krodha-vegam, I abused someone, or by pressure I used to take something which may not be proper diet to me, out of greed I took something, or I took something more, what was not necessary for my health, so krodha-vega, these rough speeches.

Jihva-vegam, what is very tasteful, I am a servant to that, slave to the tastefulness. Whatever is tasteful, it may be detrimental to my health, but I cannot control my tongue. I shall try not to be a prey to my tongue, the slave of my tongue, jihva-vega.

Udara-vega, to feed more. Jihva-vega means what is palatable to the tongue, and udara means to feed one's own full belly. Otherwise we think, 'No, I have not eaten.' What is necessary that sort of food we should take, and that amount of food we should take, what is necessary to keep up the health, udaroprashta-vegam.

Then one's earnest desire to be united with, for the men the women, for the women the men, that is also a great tendency within us. We should try to check that sort of tendency. That is mental, that is not even in the soul, that is only in the mind, and that is the worst cause of our wandering in this world. Even from

the tree to the demigods this sort of tendency is flowing, and we must be very cautious not to be prey of such flow. It is a universal and very powerful flow, and we shall try our best to keep aloof from the flow of that plane as much as possible.

Etan vegan yo visaheta dhirah, one who can control all these animal tendencies, sarvam apimam prthivim sa, he can control the whole world. Prthivim sa sisayat, one who is master of his own self, his own mind, he can be master of the world. Otherwise, in other words, whatever he likes he can do. He can make fair progress towards his ideal. All these things are recorded for our benefit and caution, in Upadesamrta, that was given by Mahaprabhu through Rupa Goswami to us in details. We shall be very much cautious about all these animal tendencies within us. We are rather slave to them. These different types of mentalities, they're masters, and I am their slave. And we must be independent of all these masters.

*kamadinam kati na katidha palita durnidesas  
tesam jata mayi na karuna na trapa nopasantih  
utsrjyaitan atha yadu-pate sampratam labdha-buddhis  
tvam ayatah saranam abhayam mam niyunksv atma-dasye*

"O Lord, for so long I have obeyed the unending, wicked dictates of lust, anger, greed, madness, delusion, and hatred, but they never took pity on me, and I have felt neither shame nor the desire to abandon them. O Lord of the Yadus, after all this, I am leaving them behind. At last I have found my genuine sanity: I am surrendered wholly unto Your lotus feet, which are the abode of fearlessness. Please now engage me as Your personal servitor." (Chaitanya-charitamrta, Madhya-lila, 22.16)

These are my lords and they're using me as their slave, and such a helpless life I am leading here. In the name of a human being I have got so many shameful tendencies within me that an animal also may not come to that lower standard. So this is our self-analysis, our real nature will be like this, shameful nature within. The enemies are within, not outside. And again within that, the Lord is there in the heart, the conception, the reign, the kingdom of Lord is more deeper. So we have got that consolation and hope and prospect. More powerful are the agents of the Lord.

Only we must give a bond and try to keep up our promise, then the help will

come from that deeper plane and will drive away all these superficial enemies that are dancing like demons on the surface of our mind. They must be driven away. And help will come from within, if we seek, if we cooperate, if we invite them really, then those sadhus, the agents of the Supreme Lord will come and drive away all these things. These demonic demonstrations on the surface of the mind will be driven forever. And we'll have happy engagement in the service of the Lord. We'll be free from all these demonic masters. That is not a cheap gain, achievement.

**Devotee:** The process is to recognise the defect and then to pray to Paramatma?

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Yes, Paramatma, to Guru, that is more to Guru and devotees, to Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, Krsna. To pray to Nityananda Prabhu, that should be most fruitful. His incarnation is meant only for the fallen. Easily we can get His help, Nityananda Prabhu, the Lord of the fallen, the chosen Lord of the fallen, Prabhu Nityananda, Guru Nityananda. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari.

## **Waking from the Dream**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** We find this verse in Srimad Bhagavatam (12.12.55):

*avismrtih krsna-padaravindayoh  
ksinoty abhadrani ca sam tanoti  
sattvasya-suddhim paramatma-bhaktim  
jnanam ca vijnana-viraga-yuktam*

“For one who remembers the lotus feet of Krishna, all inauspiciousness soon disappears, and one’s good fortune expands. In other words, one becomes free

from all material contamination, one attains liberation from repeated birth and death, and one's real spiritual life begins. As one's heart becomes gradually purified, one's devotion for the Lord within the heart awakens, and one realized the Paramatma. Thus one gradually develops knowledge (jnana), realization (vijnana), and renunciation (*vairagya*)."

Krishna consciousness, remembrance of the divine feet of Krishna –*krsna-padaravindayoh* – will dissipate, destroy the abhadra, what is undesirable, what is not good in us. That which is nasty, which is impure within us, will be destroyed by the continuance of Krishna consciousness. In any stage of its development, even in its lower stage, its slightest, 'negligent' connection can destroy our undesirable connection with the things of lower nature. And, it will promote goodness within us: *sattvasya-suddhim*, the substantial character of our existence, will be improved; our soul-existence, that will be purified. Our standpoint, our understanding, our aspiration – everything, will be purified. And, *paramatma-bhaktim*: we shall attain devotion, attachment to the super-subjective realm; and our knowledge, our conception about that – *jnanam ca* – will improve. And that knowledge – the conception about Him – will develop to *vijnana*, a proper conception, and will effect in us *viraga-yuktam*, apathy to this mundane world.

At any cost, we are to maintain our Krishna consciousness. The advice is: try to maintain Krishna consciousness, it is the medicine. And there is no other medicine which can produce Krishna consciousness, which can cure our disease and discover Krishna consciousness within us.

Krishna consciousness is the cause of Krishna consciousness! And we have to get help from the sadhu who has got Krishna consciousness within them. Just as, from one candle another candle may be lit. A candle cannot produce light from within, but it is to be lit from another candle – it is something like that. We are to awaken our buried Krishna consciousness, which is covered by '*anyabhilasa-karmma-jnana*' (fruit-seeking, selfish work, the result of the attempt to satisfy material desires, both fleeting and 'organized'; and the search for philosophical / spiritual knowledge, devoid or independent of devotional service.); so, that light, that association, will come to help the sleeping Krishna consciousness within us, and our consciousness will arise from its sleep and show itself, as it is. So, the method is that: to take *sadhu-sangha* – *krsna-bhakti janma-mula*, *haya sadhu-sangha* – association with the sadhu, devotee of Krishna, is the root-cause of Krishna consciousness.

At the same time, it is told that Krishna consciousness is ahaituki, causeless. How are we to harmonise these truths? – Krsna-bhakti, faith in Krishna, or devotion to Krishna, we can get from the sadhu; at the same time it is told that it is ‘causeless’.

In this connection, Visvanath Cakravarti Thakur has explained the meaning of ahaituki in this verse from Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.6):

*sai vai pumsam paro dharmo  
yatho bhaktir adhoksaje  
ahaituky apratihata  
yayatma suprasidati*

“The supreme occupation (dharma) for all humanity is that by which man can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be causeless and uninterrupted, to completely satisfy the self”.

He explains that here, krsna-bhakti is described as ahaituki, causeless, and also apratihata, continuous – so when it is awakened in our heart, we can feel that our heart is getting wonderfully satisfied, yayatma suprasidati. The satisfaction is produced in our heart, we can feel it. Ahaituky apratihata: it has no cause; and it cannot be checked, cannot be opposed, opposition cannot have any effect there – it is such. Bhakti comes from bhakti. In this way it is ahaituki. Just as, the light is there and another candle is lit from it. From light, light is coming. In this way we are to trace it out, to understand it: the original Light, that is eternal, self-existent, and is extending itself, so it has no cause, it is ‘causeless’. The cause is there eternally, and it is extending itself.

And, bhakti is apratihata: temporarily, it may seem to be opposed, or apparently checked, but: nehabhikrama-naso ‘sti pratyavayo-na vidyate – (“Even a small beginning in this devotional service can never go in vain nor can any loss be suffered.” Bhagavad-gita 2.49) – It won’t leave you! For the time being it may be suppressed a little, but it cannot be finished – it is of eternal character. It is of eternal character: it has got connection with the eternal aspect of the universe. So, it is ‘apratihata’. We are to come near such sort of existence, we are to come in connection with that plane of life – a particular plane, plenary existence, acquaintance, or nature. It is there; only we are to have our connection with it.

So, in this verse from Srimad Bhagavatam(12.12.55):

*avismrtih krsna-padaravindayoh  
ksinoty abhadrani ca sam tanoti  
sattvasya-suddhim paramatma-bhaktim  
jnanam ca vijnana-viraga-yuktam*

We find here, jnanam ca vijnana viraga-yuktam – ‘jnana’ means direct knowledge of a thing, and ‘vijnana’, systematic knowledge. In Bhagavad-gita also, we find this ‘vijnana’:

*jnanam te ‘ham sa-vijnanam,  
idam vaksyamy asesatah  
yj jnatva neha bhuyo ‘nyaj,  
jnatavyam avasisyate  
(Bhagavad-gita 7.2)*

“Now I shall fully describe to you, with the taste of the flavour of divine sweetness, this knowledge of My grand majestic splendour and opulences. After knowing all this, absolutely nothing will remain for you to know, being situated on this beautiful, joyful and victorious path.”

Here we find that jnana means a general knowledge, of the whole, and vijnana means the knowledge of its constituent parts – as a system, systematic knowledge. So:

Jnanam ca vijnana-viraga-yuktam, you will attain the knowledge of the Absolute as a ‘system’ – of parts, in gradation, a hierarchy.

And, ‘viraga’ – viraga has a twofold meaning: one ‘negative’, and the other ‘positive’. The negative meaning is : you will have no attraction for ‘non-God’, that is, you will have no mundane attachment, no attraction for mundane ‘necessity’. And positive: visisyate-raga – you will have excellent (visisyate) attachment (raga) – that kind of attachment which is accepted through the process of ‘selection and elimination’, attachment located in its proper place. Your attraction (to Him, to God) will not be through a raw or approximate estimation: “This is good; that is bad; this is a mixture ...”; but you will have progressively eliminative attraction, adjusted attraction. This is the meaning of viraga-yuktam.

So, this knowledge is such: ‘jnanam ca vijnanam-viraga-yuktam’: knowledge that is supported by (based on) attraction, and also, by experience of the

‘system’, that knows how much attachment – more attachment, or less – is necessary in any part of it. Discriminative attachment: “attachment for the eye, attachment for the hand, they should not be equal”; an adjusted attachment, in a particular system. The attachment should be well-adjusted: wherever, and how much, attention is necessary – the criterion is according to that. So, “The head is more important, and the leg, a little less”. In this way, you will gradually acquire properly adjusted attachment for the systematic whole.

First it is hazy, a ‘mass of attraction’, and then the attraction will be systematised. As much as you will come in connection with the other side – the object of your attachment – in a systematic way, so much you will be able to realise (Him).

So: avismrtih krsna-padaravindayoh ksinoty abhadrani ca sam tanoti .... In a general way, the path of good advancement is given here. And, then, ‘sattvasya-suddhim’: your understanding, in its progress, will have its undesirable portion eliminated. Your conception will become more clear – clearer and clearer. With that clarity, undesirable things from your conception will gradually vanish, and your progress will lead you to the perfect conception: sattvasya-suddhim. In the beginning, that ‘sattva’ (truth) is what you come to understand in an approximate way, to be ‘eternal’, or sat-cit-ananda (eternal truth, consciousness and bliss), but there will be gradual development in your understanding; it will become more clear and more pure.

So, the development towards Krishna consciousness is such. First, a ‘mass of light’; then the figure; then the potency; then the ‘lila’ (pastimes) with the potency. In this way your approach will be closer and closer, and many things, the closest and minutest things, will come to your view. The minutest part also, the most detailed things – the whole cit-vilasa (the spiritual variegatedness of the conscious plane) will be very close to you. You will be led higher and higher, closer to the specified, differentiated view of that plane. In this way there is progressive development – progress in bhakti, devotion.

## **Your most Fortunate Position**

**Srila Sridhar Maharaj:** Sri Krsna is our Master. We are not master of this world. We are parts of the whole, and we have our respective duties towards the whole. Our responsibility is towards another plane of life, which is the most subtle. We are in a diseased condition here, but when we become healthy we will have a higher plane of living. This is the Vaisnava conception. There is a higher plane beyond the jurisdiction of misconception. There is a particular place for me within this universe.

What is that? I am suffering, serving the negative side, and in all conceptions of my life I find suffering, janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi (birth, death, old age, and disease; Bhagavad-gita 13.9).

But there is a conception where life is worth living, where there is something to live for. That position has been neglected everywhere, in so many different conceptions of religious view. Our idea is paramo nirmatsaranam satam - the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.2), but their realization is all of the matsara, envious, class. The egoistic school of men cannot give up their idea that, "I am master, I am Brahman." I am a part of that master element, but I am a subordinate part. I am part of the subsidiary element.

Still they cannot think it our. They are matsara, full of jealousy. That is the root cause of their philosophy. But if they can give up their intrinsic concept of jealousy, and become a little generous, they may come to know of an infinitely higher plane of existence. One must think, "I was created of smaller stuff, only with the help of that higher thing can I improve my condition. If I become nirmatsara, one hundred percent pure in heart, and Krsna dasa, a servant of Krsna, I can enter into that higher plane, and my prospect is great." They cannot accommodate that. Paramo nirmatsaranam satam, it is there in the Bhagavatam, but they think, "If I can become the Dictator, then my fortune will be most high."

A submissive attitude is wanted. If I can become submissive to the dictatorial aspect of that higher plane, then I will be elevated, and I shall get the highest prospect, because that is the Absolute Good. So, where there is Absolute knowledge, Absolute Good, Absolute everything, then why should I not submit to Him? I am in such a vulnerable position, as I have experienced, so it is suicidal not to accept that position of surrender. I am of a lower creation. I find it

in every step of my life. I am of limited creation, but at the same time, higher creation may be there. Can I deny that? What right have I to deny that? Here also I have so much experience of so many things high and low. A hierarchy is there, from the stone to the scientist who is controlling the stone, so what is the trouble in believing that there is a hierarchy also in the original side, the higher side? What's the wrong there?

But on their side, there is too much equation, the worst kind of equation. (The equate the finite with the infinite.) That is the hindrance to our real progressive life. Mahaprabhu announced, *jivera svarupa hay, krsnera nitya dasa*, in naked terms: "You are a slave to that Highest Entity. This is your innate, natural, intrinsic position. Your self has such a relation with the Absolute." The Absolute, with whom you are connected, is so high. The All-Attractive nature of the centre is conscious love, and you are a slave to that great force of love and beauty. You are so fortunate, you may thank your stars you are so fortunate, You can be handled in any way by that Absolute beauty, charm, knowledge, everything. You are not connected by force, you are not barred from your birth from entering that domain. You have got your position there. If you want a position there, it should be of what nature? The most subordinate. As much as you have to go higher, you will have to accept the position of a subordinate.

It is clear from your own present experience. You should be satisfied with that. Otherwise, like the garbage, you'll be cast aside where the rubbish is thrown out, here in this world.

You are so limited, and you have such a high prospect. He is infinitely higher than you, but you have got a position there. Will you not be prepared to accept that honorable position there? The Lord Himself says that if you become a slave to Him, He also becomes a slave to you. What more do you need? What more do you expect?

*aham bhakta-pardhino, hy asvatantra iva dvija  
sadhubhir grasta-hrdayo, bhaktair bhakta-jana priyah*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said to Durvasa Muni: "I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of all material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotees, even those who are devotees of My devotees are very dear to Me."

Krsna says that independently, I have the position of controlling everything, but this saranagati controls Me. That is the way of affection. Not by power, not by necessity, not by intrinsic experience, but only through love can you enter into that realm. You should be satisfied with that, and what more do you want? The Lord is coming to be whipped by you, and you are not satisfied!